The American Twins of 1812

Lucy Fitch Perkins

The Riverside Press Cambridge

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THE AMERICAN TWINS OF 1812. Illustrated.

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belongs to

Old Ironsides.

THE AMERICAN TWINS OF 1812

By Lucy Fitch Perkins

ILLUSTRATED BY THE AUTHOR

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CONTENTS

THE AMERICAN TWINS OF 1812

PREFACE

"The American Twins of 1812" follows closely the authentic history of the events which it records, though for the purposes of the story there have been slight deviations from known facts in a few minor particulars. For example, the names of the midshipman and boatswain of the Essex are not those used in the story.

That the brig Betsey stopped at Philadelphia to discharge cargo on her return from a voyage to Naples is an assumption; that any other person than "Captain Orne and a boy" was transferred to the Guerrière at the time of her capture is also an assumption. These changes, however, do not affect the general correctness of the picture of this episode in our country's history.

I

A PENNSYLVANIA FARM

I

A PENNSYLVANIA FARM

The sun was just about to drop out of sight behind the hills of eastern Pennsylvania one lovely summer evening long ago, as Jonathan Ogden, the "bound-out boy" of Farmer Brinkman, turned the cows into the pasture for the night, put up the bars, and then stood still looking across the green slopes toward the distant purple hills outlined against the western sky. He watched the bright disk as it sank nearer and nearer to the horizon, then poised itself on the rim of the world to fling long shafts of light like golden banners across the fields, touching the tree-tops and the village church spire with gold and making the western windows of distant farm-houses flame with sudden splendor.

Below, in the valley, the waters of the little river winding through it turned from blue to molten gold, reflecting the colors of the sky, and then faded again until its glow was swallowed up in the creeping blue shadows of evening.

The collie dog, which had followed the cows from the barn, feeling, no doubt, that his responsibility ended when the last one passed through the pasture gate, went off by himself to bark down a woodchuck-hole he knew. A field sparrow perched on a neighboring branch and sang his evening song over and over. The tinkle of cowbells grew fainter and fainter in the distance, and still the solitary little figure lingered by the pasture bars, gazing out upon the peaceful landscape.

All day long Jonathan had been busy helping in the hay-fields, carrying water to the thirsty hired men, driving the cows to and from pasture, hoeing corn in the garden, and running a hundred errands for Frau Brinkman, and now at last there was a

moment of respite when he was alone and could think his own thoughts.

They were lonely thoughts and sad, for Jonathan's father and mother had died suddenly only a few weeks before, leaving him and his twin sister Phœbe alone in the world. The two children had hoped against hope that they might be kept together, but the Quaker Justice of the Peace, Captain Carter, who settled such cases in the village, had bound him out to Farmer Brinkman, a German settler on the rich Pennsylvania farm lands, and had taken Phœbe into his own household to be a playmate and companion to his little daughter Faith.

The weeks that had passed since had been hard ones for Jonathan. Though the farmer was not cruel at heart, neither he nor his wife had any thought except for work,—work,—from dawn until dark and after. Jonathan had been called from his rough bed under the rafters of the shed chamber at daybreak that morning. It was now dusk of a long summer day, and still

he was supperless and too tired to care whether he had anything to eat or not. No wonder that at last he laid his tousled yellow head upon the topmost rail of the pasture bars and sobbed. He was only twelve years old, and he wanted his mother.

For some minutes he wept his heart out, and Rip, the dog, returning disappointed from the empty woodchuck-hole, padded softly to his side and licked his limp hand. The boy lifted his head. Here at least was a friend.

"Good dog! Good old Rip!" he said. "Are you lonesome too?"

The sad eyes of the dog looked up into the sad eyes of the little boy with such an expression of sympathy and understanding that Jonathan dropped on his knees and hid his face in Rip's shaggy neck.

Suddenly there was a rattle of wheels on the road, and from the distant farm-house, hidden among trees to the west, came a shrill whistle, and a man's voice calling: "That boy, now! It wonders me where is

he? He should unhitch the horse already."

A woman's voice answered: "To the pasture he went, with the cows, till half an

hour yet. When he is out of sight once, he don't come back quick."

The moment the whistle sounded, the dog bounded from Jonathan's grasp, and in an instant was racing up the road to the farm-house to greet his master on his return from the village, where he had been to get the horse shod. Jonathan got to his feet more slowly and followed the dog up the road, raising little clouds of dust with his bare feet as he ran.

When at last he had unhitched and fed the horse, had bedded him for the night, and had run the wagon under a shed, he appeared in the kitchen of the farm-house, and sat down at one corner of the table still littered with the dirty supper dishes left by Farmer Brinkman and the hired men. The Farmer's wife set a plate full of salt pork and cabbage before him without a word, then stood with her arms akimbo listening to her husband as he read aloud to the hired men from a two-days-old Philadelphia newspaper which he had brought back from the village. In his slow "Dutch" way Farmer Brinkman was excited. His round

fat face was flushed, his little blue eyes shone with an unwonted glitter, and he banged his fist on the table until the dishes rattled and Jonathan jumped in his seat.

"These here English, now," said Farmer Brinkman, "ach, they think the whole world belongs to them already. From ships they take away any sailor and make him work for them yet." He pointed his stubby finger at the newspaper. "Look here once. Six thousand sailors have they taken from American ships, it says! Alway they claim they are Englishmen. Any man they need to sail their ships, he's an Englishman, they say! My cousin Lieberman, he was an Englishman, by golly! And so was a Portugee I know, and now,"—here Farmer Brinkman slapped the paper to make his news more impressive,—"what you think? These here United States, they declare war for us! War on England, by golly!"

He paused, and his little blue eyes shifted from one startled face to another in the group about him. It was not often he had

such exciting news to tell, and he wagged his finger impressively at the hired men, as he went on to expound his views.

"Yah," he said, "this here United States, now, he is like a little game rooster! His tail feathers yust sprouting! But he get up on the fence and flap his wings and crow, 'Cock-a-doodle-do,—come here and I lick you!' and that big old rooster, Great Britain, he yust fly over the fence yet, and lick the stuffing out of him! You see! No little young rooster in pin feathers ain't going to lick him, by golly!"

"But we haven't ships to fight with," said one of the hired men, a Connecticut Yankee. "I used to be a sailor myself, and I know that ever since the Embargo Act our ships have just been rotting at the wharves. That's why I quit the sea and took up with farming. 'Twan't a love of farming that drove me to it, I tell ye."

"Soon enough they'll be wanting you back on the sea again," said Farmer Brinkman, nodding his head with an air of great

wisdom. "Down at Chester and at Philadelphia the shipyards they are busy already. All the old tubs that will float, they are putting guns in them—to fight the *British Navy!*" He slapped his thigh, and his broad shoulders shook with silent laughter. "The British Navy, by golly!"

Farmer Brinkman was not usually so talkative. An extra dose or two of schnapps taken at the village tavern had perhaps loosened his tongue. He laid aside the paper, drew his chair to the fire-place, lit his pipe with a live coal, and proceeded between puffs to unburden his mind of a heavy load of opinion.

"At the tavern they say these here United States they bound to get licked. They got no navy! Pretty soon they get back where they were before the Revolution still. A British Colony once! Me, British Colony or not, it makes no difference. I plant my corn and raise my crops yust the same."

For a moment he puffed away in silence, then the absurdity of the attempt to fight

the mighty ruler of the sea with so few ships overcame him again, and he chuckled aloud and said to his wife: "You can maybe give them one of your tubs, Liddy, when the washing is done once! Put a sail on it, and a pop-gun, and send it down the river to catch them British pirates!"

He was so pleased with his wit that he sat puffing and chuckling to himself, while his wife resumed her endless tasks, and stepped back and forth, back and forth, throwing grotesque shadows about the low-ceiled room as she moved.

Jonathan sat listening with all his ears, and hoping that no one would remember him and send him to bed, for his rough little chamber over the wood-shed had been taken from him that very day to house the extra hired man, and he was to sleep on the hay in the barn until after harvest time. He dreaded the long, lonely night, so he kept very still in his corner.

The German clock over the mantel ticked away at a slow pace, and to Jonathan it

seemed to say like an ogre, "You've got to go to bed,—you've got to go to bed,—you've got to go to bed." It would go on ticking just like that, he thought, for days and weeks and months and years, ticking his life away in a weary round of unending labor with no outcome—no play, no pleasure, no home, no love. The two hired men yawned, stretched themselves, lit their candles and lounged away to bed, and still the farmer sat, blowing clouds of smoke and considering the affairs of the nation.

At last, the clock muttered and grumbled, and finally struck ten. Farmer Brinkman roused himself, rumbling so very much like the clock that it seemed to Jonathan as if he might be going to strike ten, too. But the rumble turned into a chuckle, and Jonathan heard him murmuring to himself, "Fight the British Navy, by golly!" as he knocked the ashes from his pipe and disappeared into the room beyond.

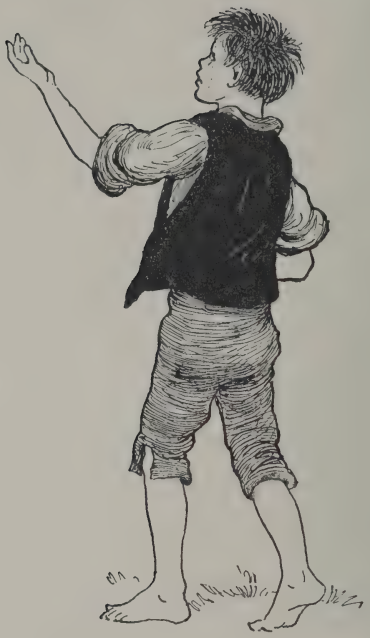
Last of all, Frau Brinkman stooped to cover the coals with ashes, and then lifted

her candle. It threw a beam on Jonathan's tow head and freckled face in his corner, and she jumped as if she had seen a ghost.

"You here yet!" she exclaimed. "You should be in bed once! Morning comes quick! Make yourself to bed now!"

"It's—it's dark," stammered Jonathan. "May I have a candle?"

"A candle! In the barn!" cried Frau Brinkman. "Himmel, but you are dumb! You'd set the barn afire. The horse won't eat you now, nor yet the chickens, and the dark won't hurt you. Get along with you. And mind this once! If you don't wake yourself up in the morning, I know somebody what will," and with this vague warning she thrust him out of the door and turned the button on the inside.



II

THE PARTING

II

THE PARTING

THE dog was sleeping on the kitchen doorstep, and Jonathan stepped on his tail in the dark. There was a yelp and a growl, and then Rip, recognizing a friend, rubbed against the boy's legs as he stood for a moment gazing into the darkness, trying to muster up courage to go to his lonely berth in the hay. The sky was blue-black, sprinkled with stars, and by their light he at last set his reluctant feet slowly in the direction of the barn. Slowly he pulled open the heavy door, then crept his way in the thick darkness to the ladder which led to the loft. Rip followed him thus far, but when Jonathan, longing for companionship, tried in the dark to boost him up the ladder, the dog rebelled, and, going back to the house,

lay down once more on the kitchen step.

Creeping from one creaking rung of the ladder to the next, and feeling his way with his hands, Jonathan at last reached the loft and, clambering over the hay, lay down before the open window high in the peak of the gable. Looking out, he could see the dark shape of the house under its canopy of elm trees. There was no light visible. Even Frau Brinkman was now in bed.

For some time he lay listening to the little sounds of insects in the hay, and to the breathing of the horses and oxen in the stalls below. There was an occasional scuttling sound as rats ran back and forth to the corn-bin. Bats in the cobwebby rafters over his head squeaked and flew about. An owl hooted. He was too tired to go to sleep at once, and he lay on the hay with his face turned toward the stars, thinking and thinking about the news that Farmer Brinkman had brought back from the village that day. There was going to be a war! There were ships in the shipyards only a few miles

away, at that very moment getting ready to sail to the ends of the earth. He thought bitterly of Farmer Brinkman.

"He is an old pig," he muttered to himself. "He doesn't care what happens to any one but himself."

He thought of the stories he had heard when he was a very little boy, as he and Phœbe sat on their grandfather's knees before the fire-place on winter evenings in the kitchen of his own old home. His grandfather had been a soldier in the Revolution, and he had filled Jonathan's mind with tales of Washington, of his courage, his fortitude, and of the hardships which had been endured right there in the very spot where they lived, for the winning of the liberties which were again in danger. And Farmer Brinkman saw in it nothing but a joke! He had come only recently to America. What did he know or care about the liberties which others had suffered to give him? He had come after these things had been won for him without effort on his part.

Little boy though he was, Jonathan knew why the war of the Revolution had been fought. It had been made very real to him by his grandfather's tales, and all these ideas were bound up with bright memories of the home now lost to him forever.

Overcome at last with weariness, he fell asleep.

He was awakened some hours later by the moon, which had risen in full splendor over the valley, putting out the fainter light of the stars, and flooding the earth with a pale radiance. It shone directly on Jonathan's upturned face, and roused him suddenly from a dream of his home, and of Phœbe. He sat upright in the hay, rubbed his eyes, and then looked out the window toward the distant hill where Captain Carter's house stood, and where at that very moment Phœbe was quietly sleeping; and a wave of bitter rebellion at the conditions of his own life came over him. He looked down at the Brinkman house under the sheltering elms, where the farmer was snor-

ing the night away, and shook his fist at it.

"I won't stand it," he said aloud. "I'll run away to sea, that's what I'll do, and I won't come back till I'm a captain! All you want of me is work, work, work!"

Sleep had refreshed him and given him new courage, and, fired by the idea of escape, he seized his yellow head in both hands and thought as he had never thought before.

"If they need men on ships, they'll need boys too," he said to himself. "I'd see a lot of the world and learn something, even if I can't learn out of books. I'm going to do it!"

Not risking any sober second thoughts, he sprang to his feet, groped his way over the hay to the ladder, climbed down from the loft, and a moment later stood in the moonlight before the barn-door. Rip heard him and dashed toward him, barking as he came.

"Good old Rip,—be still!" Jonathan murmured, patting him. "It's only Jon."

Rip leaped up and put his paws on Jonathan's shoulders and wagged his tail as though to say, "Take me with you."

Fearing lest Frau Brinkman might look out the window to see what had roused the dog, Jonathan slipped quietly into the deep shadow of the barn, and, followed by Rip, went down the lane and into the fields which lay between him and the hill where Captain Carter's house stood. He could not go away

without at least trying to speak to Phœbe, even though he risked everything in the attempt. The roosters were already answering each other from farm to farm, and he knew the dawn could not be far away; so he quickened his steps and soon came out on the road as it lifted toward the hills, and here, to his great relief, Rip deserted him to follow a rabbit-trail, and he was quite alone.

Half an hour of rapid walking brought him to the old Colonial farm-house where Captain Carter lived during the summer, and very cautiously he crept into the yard and stood under the spreading oak tree which shaded the room in which he knew his sister slept. Here he stopped, trembling. Suppose he should rouse a dog and be discovered and made to go back to Farmer Brinkman! Captain Carter was the one man in all the world who had authority to say what should be done with him. Yet, whatever the risk, he must speak to Phœbe!

The window of his sister's room was

open. He stooped in the driveway long enough to gather a handful of pebbles, which he put in his pocket, then silently began to climb the great oak tree. Up and up he went until he was on a level with the second-story window, then, walking along a spreading limb, holding by a branch higher up, he got near enough to peer into the room.

In the corner he could dimly make out a white shape which must be the bed. He crept as near to the window as he could and whispered, "Phœbe! Phœbe!" Then his heart turned over! Suppose her room had been changed! Suppose some one else was sleeping there! He waited with his heart thumping so loudly it seemed to him as if the noise of it must awaken the sleeper, whoever it was, but there was no sound within, and no movement from the bed. After a time he grew bolder, and, taking a pebble from his pocket, tossed it through the window. He heard a little frightened cry, and saw a white figure sit up in the bed.

"Phœbe, Phœbe," he whispered again. "Don't be frightened. It's Jon."

There was a soft rustling sound as the white figure sprang from the bed and ran across the room to the window. A lovely little girl with golden hair and dark eyes leaned out and looked eagerly about on the ground for her brother.

"Jon, Jon, where is thee?" she called, softly.

"Hush," whispered Jonathan. "I'm up in the tree. I can almost touch you!"

She peered eagerly into the heavy shadows and held out her hands.

"What is it? Oh, what is it?" she whispered. "Why is thee here at this time of night?"

"I came to tell you I'm going to run away to sea," said Jonathan.

"Run away," gasped Phœbe, "and leave me! Oh, Jon!"

"I'm going because I can't stand it at the Brinkmans'," said Jonathan. "I just work, work from daylight until after dark.

I don't have a chance to learn anything. I never shall if I stay there. There's a war, and they need men on the ships, and I'm going away and see the world!"

"Oh, Jon, Jon!" sobbed Phœbe. "I shall never, never see thee again!"

"Oh, yes, you will," said Jonathan stoutly, though his own throat ached with suppressed sobs. "I'll come back some day when I'm a Captain, and you won't be ashamed of me then. If I should stay here and get to be like the Brinkmans, you'd not be willing to own me!"

"Oh, Jon, thee must not talk like that!" said Phœbe. "I shall love thee forever and ever."

Jonathan shook his head. "No," he said, "we should be different. You are different now. Already you say 'thee' like the Quakers. You are going to grow up with the Carters, and learn from books and be a lady. I should just be a farm-hand."

"But," gasped Phœbe, snatching at a straw, "maybe if I should tell Captain Carter

how unhappy thee is at the Brinkmans', he would find another place for thee. Maybe he would send thee on one of his own ships. Thee knows he is a ship-owner. He only sent thee to Farmer Brinkman because he thought a farmer's life a good one for thee. The Dutch are wonderful farmers, he says. Indeed, Jon, he is a good, kind man, and only seeks thy good."

"No," said Jon firmly, "he bound me out to Farmer Brinkman. He would just send me back to him, and I *will not* go back. See! It's almost daybreak, and they'll soon be looking for me in the hay-loft. Good-bye, Phœbe, good-bye!"

He leaned as far as he dared from his tree-branch, and she leaned as far as she dared from her window, and they kissed each other with tears streaming down their cheeks.

"Suppose I shouldn't be here when thee comes back!" gasped Phœbe, as Jonathan started to climb down from the tree. He paused on one of the lower limbs.

"I'll look for you till I find you if it takes ten years," he said stoutly. "Promise you won't tell any one you've seen me, Phœbe. They might catch me and bring me back! I couldn't bear it!"

"I promise," sobbed Phœbe.

He was on the ground by this time, and the moonlight was already blending with the first flush of dawn as he stepped out into the driveway, looked back at the lovely little face in the window, kissed his hand to her, and was gone. For a long time after the determined little figure had disappeared from view, Phœbe knelt by her window, weeping with loneliness, praying for her brother's safety, and shivering with dread of the coming days in which she must somehow keep his secret. But how loyally she kept that secret, how bravely she went about her daily tasks, what relief she felt when the search for the missing boy was at last given up, and life flowed on again in its usual quiet channels, cannot be told here if we are to follow the adventures of the runaway.

III

THE RED-HEADED MAN

III

THE RED-HEADED MAN

When he was safely out of sight of Captain Carter's house, Jonathan left the road by which he had come and, plunging again into the fields, followed the downward slope of the hills until he reached the little stream which flowed through the valley. His plan was to follow its winding until he reached its junction with the Schuylkill some miles below. From there he trusted to find his way to the shipyards of Philadelphia or Chester farther down the Delaware River.

That he would be followed he felt sure, for Farmer Brinkman was responsible for him in the eyes of the law, and would never let him go without trying to find him and bring him back; so all day long he traveled as little as possible on the road, slipping

from it into the underbrush whenever he heard the sound of wheels, or of horses' hoofs.

This made his progress slow, and it was nearly dusk when at last he came out of a stretch of woodland and saw the waters of the Schuylkill shining before him in the level rays of the setting sun. The lonely road here followed the river, and for some distance there was not a house in sight.

He was tired and hungry, for he had had nothing to eat all day but some young turnips to which he had helped himself from a farmer's field, and some blueberries which he found in a pasture. There was no prospect of either food or a bed that night, for he had no money and would not have dared show himself at any tavern or house in the region if he had.

More miserable and homesick than he had ever been before in his life, but as determined as ever, he came out on the stretch of open road and saw, lying in the river not far from shore, the hulk of an ancient sail-

ing vessel with its name, "Black Swan," on the prow in letters almost worn away. It was long since the boat had been grounded there, and left to rot, for it was sunk deep in the water, which evidently filled the hold. The deck floor and the wreck of a cabin still stood above the water-line, and on deck, sitting on a box with his back against the cabin, was a short man with a shock of red hair. He was smoking a pipe, and as Jonathan appeared on the road, separated from him by only a narrow strip of water, he watched the boy with the curiosity of an idle man.

Curiosity was quickened to keen interest as he heard the sound of horses' hoofs far back on the road and noticed that the boy kept glancing behind him as if he were afraid of being followed. Nearer and nearer came the thud of the horses' feet, and, wondering why the approaching horseman was pounding along at such a rate in that lonely region at such a late hour of the day, the man fixed his attention upon the point

where the road emerged from the woods, and soon there appeared a galloping calico mare, carrying on her back a fat, red-faced, pop-eyed farmer with his coat-tails streaming out behind him and the daylight showing between him and the saddle at every leap.

Jonathan gave one look at the horse and rider, and quick as a flash dropped on his stomach in the long grass at the water's edge and slid quietly into the river. He could swim, and, keeping close to the hull of the Black Swan, so the red-headed man could not see him without leaning over the rail, he slipped through the water like an eel and hid behind the wreck. Here he found a large flat rock sticking out of the water, and a small row-boat beside it, fastened by a rope to the hulk of the Black Swan. He climbed into the boat and sat huddled and dripping, listening to the thud, thud, of the horse's hoofs.

Suddenly the hoof-beats stopped, and a cold chill seized him as he heard Farmer Brinkman's voice shouting to the red-

headed man on the boat. If he stayed where he was, there was danger that he could be seen when the farmer should pass, for the road turned just beyond to follow a bend in the river.

Determined not to be caught, he seized the rungs of the Jacob's-ladder on the ship's side, and, climbing like a monkey, peeped cautiously over the rail, meaning if possible to hide on the boat itself. Fortunately he came up behind the wreck of the ancient cabin, and, slipping silently between it and the rail, was able to see what went forward without being seen.

The red-headed man was standing on the deck, pipe in hand, gazing blandly into the angry face of Farmer Brinkman, and Farmer Brinkman was glaring at him from the road.

"Hey, there, you!" called the farmer, "did you see a little boy go by on the road already?"

Jonathan, almost smothered with suspense, waited for the Irishman's reply.

"What kind of a little boy?" he asked.

"Yellow hair and freckles," shouted the farmer. "Yust wait till I catch him once, by golly! You see something then!"

His tongue was thick, and it was evident that he had stopped at a tavern on his way; a safe strip of water lay between him and the boat, and the Irishman longed for a little excitement, so he called back: "You're drunk, Heiny; that's what ails ye. I've sat here till I've near grown fast to me seat, no little yellow boy with freckles having passed by."

Jonathan breathed once more, but his courage sank again as the farmer shouted back:

"Donner und blitzen! I saw a little boy, yust the size of him, on the road still, when I came out of the woods yonder! You done something with him, — ain't?"

"Saw him, did you?" jeered the Irishman. "Faith, with that head on you, you might be seein' anything at all! In another minute you'll likely be tellin' you see two

of me, and after, tryin' to lick the both of us as like as not!"

"Watch out I don't get mad on you,"

bawled the farmer, looking ready to burst with rage.

"If it's a little yellow boy with freckles ye're after, ye'd better be lookin' for him in the woods back beyant," shouted the Irishman, "for I ain't him meself, and there's no other in sight, and ye can see for yourself there's never a place to hide. Maybe, with that head on you, you might be seeing it twice over!"

The farmer's face turned a deeper purple. "You come here once," he shouted, "and I'll learn you to tell me I'm drunk."

"I've no need to learn that same," roared the Irishman. "I know it already."

The quarrel might have gone much farther if the two men had both been on land. As it was, they stood glaring at each other with the river between them for a few minutes, then the farmer shook his fist at the Irishman, struck his horse a violent blow, and, turning back toward the wood, was soon out of sight, leaving a trail of dust and bad words in his wake.

The red-headed man watched him until the trees hid him from view, then, scratching his flaming locks with a sun-browned hand, he murmured to himself, but loud enough for Jonathan to hear: "I'm wantin' to know meself where that little divil went, —or was it a ghost I saw, and no boy at all? Maybe it's meself that's seein' things

after all! Troth, though, I never yet heard tell of a ghost with freckles."

Then he paused, his mouth and eyes both wide open with astonishment, as he beheld the dripping tow head and freckled face of the ghost peering at him from behind the corner of the cabin. Overcome with surprise, he collapsed suddenly upon his box, like a deflated balloon.

"Where were ye when your da was lookin' for ye, ye little divil?" he said, cordially. "By all the signs ye'll get well walloped when ye go back to your happy home."

"He isn't my da, and I'm not going back," cried Jonathan hotly. "I'm going away to sea."

The Irishman's eyes opened still wider. "Anyway, where were ye hidin' yerself, I ask ye?" he said. "First I saw ye, then I didn't, and no place for ye to go at all."

"I swam round behind the ship," said Jonathan, "and got into the little boat. Then I climbed the ladder."

"Did ye now?" exclaimed the Irishman

with admiration. "That's my little boat,—at least timporarily. Ye're a broth of a boy, and by the same token as wet as a drowned rat!"

Jonathan could have guessed as much himself, for the water was running from his clothing in streams, making little rivulets on the deck. The Irishman rose from his box.

"Be this and be that," he remarked, "and da or no da, it busts in on me that ye'd better hang up yer wash." Then with a ceremonious flourish toward the cabin he added, "Step in to me residence and peel, Mr.— Mr.—"

"My name is Jonathan Ogden," said the boy, with as much dignity as his drenched condition permitted. He had no chance to explain himself further, for at that moment, overcome by fatigue and hunger, he sank down in a dead faint upon the deck.

When he came to again, he found himself in the cabin, lying on what had once been the captain's bunk. The Irishman was nowhere to be seen, but from heaven, it seemed to Jon, there came the smell of fry-

ing bacon. He lay for a moment, sniffing the delicious odor, then raised himself on his elbow and looked about at his strange surroundings.

Night had fallen, but the tiny cabin was illuminated by a mysterious flickering light which seemed to come through the open door from somewhere outside the wreck. By this uncertain light he was able to get his bearings.

The cabin had been made habitable by the use of a few boxes and broken dishes. A sailor's chest stood in one corner, and lying on top of it was a sailor's blouse and wide breeches. Jon's own clothes were carefully spread out on the deck rail to dry, and he was covered with a blanket. He looked at himself in astonishment. Where had he been? How came his clothes to be hanging there when he could not remember having taken them off? What was this strange trick that had been played upon him?

He rose, and, creeping to the door, wrapped in his blanket, looked about to

find the source of the flickering light. A welcome sight met his eyes. On the rock beside the boat a bright fire was burning, and, kneeling before it, cooking bacon in a frying-pan, and turning it with a pointed stick, was his new-found friend. The trees on the opposite bank of the inlet glowed with the weird light of the leaping flames,

and fearful black shadows lurked beneath and beyond them. From the deep blue vault of the sky the stars twinkled down as if amused by the strange ways of mortals upon the earth.

For a moment Jonathan clung dizzily to the door-frame, overcome with desire for food, yet not daring to appear in the glare of the fire-light without his clothes. At last he sent a faint "Ahoy!" over the deck-rail.

The Irishman looked up at him, beaming. "There ye are, me bully pirate," he cried cheerfully. "Come aboard and take on some ballast. Yer hold must be impty!"

"I haven't any clothes," said Jonathan.

"Shake yerself into them sailor's togs lyin' on the box and come along," called the Irishman.

It was a strange little figure that climbed over the rail a few moments later, and, crawling uncertainly over the row-boat moored to the side of the wreck, landed beside the Irishman on the tiny island.

"This is the cook's galley, all complete," said the man as he dropped dabs of corn-meal mixed with hot water into the bubbling fat. "I'm a sailor and a chanty man, and a cook ye'll not find the like of, no, not in the whole British navy. Sit down there till I prove it."

He pushed the boy gently to a seat on the rock, and, fishing out a piece of bacon and a golden-brown cake with his stick, placed them on a flat stone and handed the improvised plate to Jon. The next few moments were like heaven to the famished boy. Never had he tasted anything so satisfying. He ate so fast that he burned his tongue, and the Irishman heaped his plate a second time without a word.

When their hunger had been appeased, the man lit his pipe, and the two stretched themselves at full length on their stomachs, and while his new friend smoked away like a chimney with a faulty flue, Jonathan told him the story of his life. The Irishman listened with interest but made no comment

until Jon had finished; then he took his pipe from his mouth, and said, solemnly:

"I like yer spunk, Jonathan. Ye're a broth of a boy! I've said it and I'll stick by it, and I'll not see you go back to that bloated old barrel of a Dutchman. Me own name is Patrick Ambrose Barney, named for two saints, but a sailor and no saint meself. There's few saints among sailors, me lad. The life ain't conducive to piety, but 'twill make a man of ye, and Patrick Ambrose is the boy that will stick by and see ye treated fair if so be he can." And on this compact the two solemnly shook hands.

This ceremony finished, Barney resumed his pipe, and between puffs gave Jonathan selected chapters from his own checkered past.

"Just at the present time," he said, "I am, as ye might say, livin' in seclusion. It's not that I'm such an aristocrat ayther. There's other reasons. Ye know, my son, there's a war waitin' for us, but I'm in no haste to catch up with it, not until I'm sure of fightin' on me own side anyway. I'm an

American,—by choice,—naturalized! I've got me papers," he touched his pocket, "but I'm so pop'lar with the British that ivery time I get within hailin' distance of a British ship they won't take no for an answer,—they just insist on me comin' aboard."

He sighed, shook his head, and winked

solemnly at Jon. "'Tis the very divil to be as pop'lar as I am, me lad, and I'm takin' steps to suppress me attractions. That's why I'm livin' *incog* on me private yacht."

Here he stopped to fill his pipe, crowd the tobacco into the bowl with his stubby finger, and light it afresh from a coal which he took up in his callous palm.

"I've been taken off American ships against me will in my time, and made to serve before the mast on British vessels," he went on, "and, now this war is on, they'll be after me again more than likely, but I'll not oblige them, however much coaxin' they do. It's flatterin', to be sure, but me mind's made up."

"That's just what the war is about, isn't it?" asked Jon.

"True for you, me lad, it is," said Patrick Ambrose, crossing his legs Turkish-fashion, and getting down with evident relish to the story of his life. "Ye see, — 'twas this way. I wint away from old Ireland to sea when I was just the size of yerself there."

"Did you go away when you had a mother?" asked Jon, as if he could hardly believe such a thing possible.

Barney nodded. "I did so," he admitted, "and she cryin' after me fine and loud. And no wonder at all, me bein' the youngest and purtiest of six sons, and she needin' me to complete the set, as ye might say. But cheer up, lad! She's hale and hearty, and livin' in the flats of Jersey this instant minute, God bless her!"

Jon looked relieved by this news.

"Ye see," Barney went on, "I'm what they call an 'impressed seaman.' I'm a '*casus belli*,' that's what I am; leastways, so I was told."

"What's a *casus belli?*" asked Jon, much awed, "and who called you it?"

"'Twas the judge that made out me naturalization papers," said Barney, "and meanin' no offense by it ayther. Anyway, 'twas after I got me papers — in June, 1807, it was — I shipped on the 'Chesapeake,' as tidy a little frigate as ever floated. But, lo

and behold you, we got no farther than Cape Henry when we was overhauled by the British ship Leopard. The captain of the Leopard claimed there was British sailors aboard, and he was bound to take 'em off, they being needed on their own ships, and when old Commodore Barron refused for to leave him do it, didn't they fire on us? They did so! There was twenty-one of us killed and wounded, before they came aboard and carried off four Britishers. I know, for I was one of 'em."

"One of the four Britishers?" asked Jon.

"No," said Barney, "killed and wounded."

"But you couldn't be both, you know," cried Jon.

"Mebbe so, mebbe not," replied the Irishman, "but, be that as it may, I'd no more than got meself patched up again six months after, than along comes the 'Embargo Act' and sorrow an American ship was allowed to leave port at all. It was all along of the British treatin' the Chesapeake that way. Anyway, so they said."

"But I don't see how the 'Embargo Act' could hurt England any," said Jon. "It just kept our own ships in port."

"No more do I," said Barney, "but the President thought it would damage her trade. There's nothin' like a blow in the pocketbook to knock 'em sensible, he said, but it looks to me as if we more or less cut off our nose to spite our face. Anyway, be that as it may, it was short pickin's for Barney until the embargo was lifted and I got a job with Captain Bainbridge, on an American merchantman going to Russia."

"Who is Captain Bainbridge?" asked Jon, for Barney spoke as if the whole world knew his name.

"The finest officer in the navy," said Barney, lifting his hand in a sailor's salute. "He was hard hit by the embargo, too, and asked leave for to make a trip on a merchantman for the sake of the money."

"I hope he got a lot of it," said Jon.

"Well, we both, as you might say, got rich in experience," answered the sailor.

"It was a rough trip, I'm tellin' ye, and, what with gettin' into trouble in Denmark and one thing and another, there was many a time I wished meself back where I came from, but the walkin' was no good, so I stuck by the old man through thick and thin till a year or so ago, when he went on a second voyage to Russia. Since then I've been runnin' up and down the Hudson on one of them new-fangled steamboats. But I got sick of that. There's nothing like a sailin' ship to a real sailor, so I'm wishin' for to sign up again with my captain if so be he'll have me. He's in command of the navy yard at Charlestown now, I'm told."

"Why did you come here, then?" asked Jon.

"Come back to give me old mother a treat," said Barney promptly, "and meanin' to ship back to Boston on a coast vessel, but when I was down on the docks prospectin' round for a likely chance, lo and behold you, didn't I run plumb into a Portugee sailor I knew on that voyage to Russia?

He's as bloodthirsty a villain as ever walked a deck. We had a triflin' dispute once, and I give him a black eye. He's an unforgivin' divil, and would like nothing better than to cut out me liver and eat it raw. He told me as much. I've troubles enough of me own without courtin' more, and that Portugee is loaded to the muzzle with trouble, and liable to go off any minute. So I took me unobtrusive departure in this little boat that night, and came up here, intendin' for to save meself for the real fight that's to come. 'Twould be a shame indeed to waste Patrick Ambrose Barney on one lone Portugee when himself would be so useful in cleanin' up the British Navy!"

He kicked the embers of the fire together with his foot, and the flames flared up again, lighting his weather-beaten face and twinkling blue eyes with a weird light.

"I've been here four days now, but there's a ship called the Betsey sailing up the coast to-morrow. She stopped here to deliver some cargo on her way back from

Naples. I know the captain and I've promised meself to him, so I'll be gettin' along down to Philadelphia again come daylight, and ye can come with me, lad, if ye're still minded to follow the sea. Captain Orne will take ye aboard, I make no doubt, but it's a rough life, I'm tellin' ye, without this war thrown in. Let ye make no mistake about that."

"I've nothing to go back to," said the boy. "I'll go with you, Barney."

"Get along to bed with ye, then," said Barney. "Here I am keepin' ye awake with me blether, whin ye should be asleep and gettin' yerself ready for the morn."

A little later that night the moon, looking down on the shimmering waters of the Schuylkill, might have seen what looked like two giant cocoons lying on the deck of the Black Swan. Out of the end of one came a shock of red hair, and from the other a brush of tow stuck out above the tip of a freckled nose. Jonathan and his newfound friend were asleep under the stars.

IV

DOWN THE RIVER

IV

DOWN THE RIVER

At the crack of dawn next morning, when Jon was aroused by Barney, he opened his eyes upon a wonderful sight. The eastern sky was ablaze with pink clouds, and above the trees on the farther shore of the river peeped the rim of the sun.

"Up with ye, me brave buccaneer," said Barney, giving him a poke in the ribs with an oar he had in his hand. "If ye want to make your escape from that Dutchman, ye'd better be stirring yer stumps. It's sun-up and me gallant ship sails in a few minutes." He waved his hand toward the row-boat, which was bobbing cheerfully up and down on the choppy waves tossed up by the morning breeze.

"We'll drop quietly down the river to

Philadelphia and pick up a breakfast on the way. Shake yerself into yer clothes, lad. They may not be bone dry, but the sun will finish the job for ye."

As he talked, he went in and out of the little cabin, and by the time Jon was dressed in his own clothes, Barney had his few belongings in the row-boat and was ready to start. Jon clambered down the ship's ladder and took his place in the bow just as Barney finished rigging a sail by setting up the oar with a stick tied crosswise on it. Over the mast thus formed, he drew a shirt, the sleeves slipping over the cross-tree, and he tied small ropes to the tail of it on either side.

Taking the ropes in his hand, he seated himself and loosed the boat from its moorings. Under his skillful management the shirt caught the fresh morning breeze, and in a few moments they were out of the inlet and dancing merrily over the blue waters of the Schuylkill.

It was a morning long to be remembered.

The little waves sparkled in the sun, the breeze brought sweet odors from the vegetation along the shores, birds sang in the tree-tops, and such a sense of freedom and joy came to Jon that he felt like singing. As for Barney, he did sing. Handling the sail as easily as an old lady handles her knitting-needles, he lolled back in his seat and improvised a sailor's chanty:

"Farewell, me lass, I'm bound to leave ye,
Blow, ye bully breeze, blow.
So dry yer eyes, I'll not deceive ye,
Blow, ye bully breeze, blow.

"The boat dips down to the waves that rock her,
Blow, ye bully breeze, blow.
But keep us out of Davy Jones' locker,
Blow, ye bully breeze, blow."

For some time they skimmed along, the wind and the current combining to carry them swiftly on their way, and when they were several miles from their starting-point Barney turned the boat in shore. They landed on a little point, and while Barney

caught a fish for breakfast, Jon built a fire and prepared a bed of coals to cook it.

In another hour they were on their way again, and the late afternoon found them, after a glorious day of sunshine and fresh air, within sight of the chimneys and spires of Philadelphia. They supped that night on the little store of provisions which Barney had brought with him from the Black Swan, and slept a dreamless sleep on heaps of new-mown hay in a farmer's field.

Early next morning they were again astir, and before the city was well awake, Barney had quietly moored their little craft where it would be found by its real owner, and the two set forth in search of a breakfast.

Jon, in his eagerness to see all the sights of the city, took the lead, and was so absorbed in gazing at the great hulls of vessels lying at the wharves that he nearly walked off the dock into the river. Barney seized him by the collar just in time, and gave him a sudden jerk backward.

"Hard-a-lee!" he cried. "What's wrong

with your steerin' gear, lad? Keep your weather eye open or you'll be down with the mermaids before you know it."

Jonathan grinned sheepishly, and fell into step beside Barney as well as his short legs would allow, and the two left the docks and wandered up the narrow streets along the water-front.

Soon they came to a shabby little tavern with a sign swinging beside the door which had a rude picture of a sailor on it with his hands on a wheel and the words "Steer Inn" below. Barney must have been there before, for the blowzy, red-faced woman who let them in was Irish, too, and greeted him like an old friend. Nodding curiously at Jon, she said, "Where did you pick it up, Barney?"

"Found him in my stockin' Christmas mornin'," Barney answered promptly. Then he added, "Goin' to make a sailor of him."

"Better be gettin' him some warm clothes, then," said the woman, looking at Jon's shabby jacket and bare feet. "What he's

got on won't stand betwixt him and weather."

Barney gave the boy a puzzled look and scratched his head. "That's the truth, or it can't be spoke," he remarked. Then he felt in his pocket, took out a purse which was both flat and shabby, and carefully inspected its contents. It did not take long, for there was little in it, but he said cheerfully: "Ashore ten days and enough left to buy a good breakfast, and a little more still burnin' holes in me pocket! Bring us something fillin' to remember ye by, Mrs. Rafferty, and then we'll be after gettin' the lad a trooso for to go to sea with."

The two sat down at a table in the low-ceiled room of the tavern, and Mrs. Rafferty shuffled away to the kitchen, from which she emerged a little later bearing a tray laden with sausages, flapjacks, and coffee.

"There, me lad," said she, heaping his plate with the flapjacks and pouring a stream of black molasses over them, "stow that in your hold."

She stood with hands resting on her hips and watched the boy as he attacked the smoking cakes, and when he had cleaned his plate, filled it again from a fresh supply which she brought in from the kitchen.

"It surely is a treat to see you put away them flapjacks so fine and hearty," she said

admiringly, as Jon ate his way steadily through the second plateful. "I got a boy of me own, God only knows where, on the sea. 'Mother,' he used to say to me, 'do they have flapjacks and molasses in heaven?' says he, 'because if they haven't,' says he, 'I ain't set to go there.' 'Twould do you good to see him eat. You couldn't believe the room there was inside him. You mind me of him, lad, yellow hair and freckles and all. Speckled as a frog he was with 'em, God bless him. He was about the size of yourself, too, when he went away to sea."

Overcome with memories she wiped away a tear on the corner of her apron, and then suddenly slapped her hands together.

"Wait here a bit till I come back," she cried, and with that she shuffled hastily out of the room.

It was not long before she returned with a bundle in her arms.

"Here now," she said, dumping it down on a wooden chair beside Jon. "Here are

some clothes himself left behind when he went away. Too small they were for him, and doing nobody any good at all since. Try and see do they fit yourself now."

Jon, quite overcome, could say nothing at all, but Barney was never at a loss for words.

"Ye're a dacint woman, Mrs. Rafferty, ma'am," he said with conviction. "Let any one say the contrary, and it's Patrick Ambrose that will punch his head for him."

"I'd be hoping somebody might be doing the same for my own boy, and he needing it," sighed the woman. "Go in there and put them on, lad." She opened the door to an inner room as she spoke, and pushed Jon inside.

When he appeared in the door a few moments later, she seized him by the shoulder and turned him slowly around.

"Did you ever see the like of that now?" she cried triumphantly to Barney. "They fit him more so than if they was made for him! It's heart-scalded I am that there are

no shoes for him, but Terry was always that hard on shoes there was never enough leather left of them to make even a hinge."

"I'll get the shoes," said Barney, "and by the same token we'd better be movin' along, for this night sees us shipped and going down the river or I miss my reckonin'."

"Ye'll have no trouble getting a berth," said Mrs. Rafferty, "for now the tale is that every ship that's seaworthy, and some that ain't, is bein' fitted fer sea, and they're short of sailors, so good-bye and good luck to ye."

"Good-bye, ma'am, and good luck, and thank you for the clothes," Jon managed to say; then he and Barney left her standing in the tavern door and went in search of a pair of shoes.

All the morning they wandered through the streets of the old town, and Barney spent nearly every penny he had left in finishing Jon's modest outfit and laying in a store of tobacco for himself.

Noon found them back again among the docks, looking over ships that were about to sail, finding out where they were going and on what errands. The water-front was a forest of masts, for after years of idleness in maritime commerce, due to the Embargo Act, the whole region buzzed with a fury of preparation for sea, and sailors swarmed

on the docks loading stores of goods on merchantmen, while whalers, coast-runners, East-Indiamen, and privateers jostled each other in the river, or waited in dry-dock for repairs.

The shipping-offices were full of seamen who had been obliged to seek other employment and were now eager to feel the roll of the deck under their feet once more.

Jon, keeping close in the wake of Barney, overheard scraps of talk here and there among the waiting men, and the talk was all of the war.

"Only sixteen ships in our navy, they say," said one sunburned sailor to another, "and the British have more than you can count! It's like sending a family of mice to assault an army of cats."

"Well," answered his mate, "I'd as lief be killed in a good fight as starve to death at home with no job. I've been living from hand to mouth for three years, and less mouth than hand at that, I'm telling ye. It's these Britishers that have made all the

trouble, and I'd like a good crack at 'em. Let them leave our commerce alone, I say."

"Free Trade and Sailors' Rights," sang out a third, and "Right you are, my hearty," cried a fourth, slapping him on the back. "It's time we taught them a lesson. They've been making trouble for us for a hundred years."

"If we but had more ships!" sighed an older man, shaking his head doubtfully.

Jon listened, and thought of Farmer Brinkman. He could almost hear him chuckle, "Fight the British Navy, by golly!" and his heart beat faster as he drew nearer and nearer to the great adventure.

At last their turn came, and a few moments later he and Barney had signed up as sailor and ship's boy on the merchant brig Betsey of Salem, Captain Orne, bound for Boston.

"This voyage will give ye a christenin'," said Barney, as they turned away after signing their names, "and if ye don't like your quarters 'tis but a short trip anyway, and

if Captain Bainbridge has no place for us, we'll find another ship. With this war and the need of sailors we can be as indepindint as hogs on ice,—at least till we get to sea. After that, God help ye, there's no choosin' anything until ye're in port again, and mebbe not then."

Late in the afternoon they went aboard ship, and as the sun dipped toward the west the Betsey's sails were spread like great wings, to a favoring breeze, and the brig moved slowly through the crowded shipping down the broad stretches of the Delaware. Past Chester, where were more shipyards as busy as these of Philadelphia, they sped, past Wilmington, and on and on down the ever broadening river toward the sea.

V

THE SHIP'S BOY

V

THE SHIP'S BOY

In the next few days Jon was to learn that being bound out to a Pennsylvania farmer was an enviable lot as compared with being "ship's boy," for he found himself at the mercy of every one on board. It was his duty to run errands, fetch and carry, and do the dirtiest and most offensive tasks on the ship at the beck and call of any one who chose to command him. His food was coarse, and he ate only such scraps as were left when the sailors had been fed. He had to trim and clean the evil-smelling slush lamps which served to make darkness visible in the forecastle.

He was sick from the motion of the ship, and his hands were never free from the nauseating smell of oil, yet not for a moment was he allowed to shirk a duty. If he

failed to do what was expected of him, he was reminded of it by a rope's-end and a flood of profanity. He saw little of Barney, and when he did, got cold comfort from him.

"It's the divil and all, lad, and I know it," he would say. "I was ship's boy once meself. But 'twill make a man out of ye. Kape your tongue in yer head and do yer duty. Some day when ye're a Captain, it'll be your turn, and ye'll have a ship's boy of your own to kick and cuss at."

This hopeful outlook failed to wake any real enthusiasm in Jon, and he crept away by himself to a corner behind the cook's galley, and wept in secret until he was discovered by the cook and sent to fill the hated slush lamps again.

For days the Betsey sped bravely on her way without adventure, but one morning, as Jonathan was carrying some dishes to the cook's galley, he heard a sudden cry from the watch in the crow's-nest:

"British ship off the starboard bow."

It seemed as if the very boards of the Betsey thrilled with the cry, for any ship in those days might be a pirate ship flying false colors as a decoy, and if it were really a British ship, their danger was no less great.

Captain Orne and the mate went at once to the weather rail and scanned the stranger through their glasses, and Jonathan, burning with curiosity, paused, dishes in hand, to pick up any crumbs of information that might fall.

"If she's what she pretends to be," he heard the Captain say, "she's likely to give us a chase," and, putting his trumpet to his lips, he shouted, "Crowd on every stitch of canvas and let her run before the wind!"

Instantly there was a scurrying to and fro and a sudden scrambling into the rigging as the sailors sprang to obey. Jonathan ran with his dishes to the cook's galley, and when his duties permitted him again to come on deck, all sails were set

and the Betsey was skimming over the water like a flying gull.

Meanwhile two other ships had appeared on the distant horizon.

"British ships, all of 'em, I'll go bail," groaned Barney in Jon's ear. "The coast patrol, more than likely. They're ragin' up and down the map, pickin' up every ship they can get hold of. If it's the British themselves, our goose is cooked."

Jonathan's hair rose on end. He could feel it lift, for now it was plain that the British ship had sighted them, and she was already hoisting more canvas to increase her speed. To Jon it scarcely seemed possible that he, brought up in the peaceful valley of the Delaware, was actually going to be in a sea fight.

He swallowed a lump in his throat as big as an egg and stood beside Barney watching the flying British frigate as she bore down upon them.

On and on she came, and soon, "Blow me, if it ain't the Guerrière," the mate cried

to Captain Orne. "A British frigate, as I'm a sinner!"

The race between them was a short one, for the Betsey was no match for the British ship in speed, and the Guerrière was soon almost upon them. When the Betsey did not immediately strike her colors in response to their demand, a shot swept the length of the deck, carrying destruction with it. The shot carried away the mainsail halyards, and the sail, swooping suddenly to the deck, engulfed Barney in its folds, and nearly wiped Jonathan into the sea.

While they were struggling to their feet, another volley swept over them. To attempt a reply with the ship's one little gun would have been madness, and to save the useless sacrifice of lives the captain struck his colors.

Jonathan watched the flag come down with tears of rage. He watched the British ship maneuver until she was alongside their own.

Then both ships lay to, while a boat carrying a young officer and manned by

twelve stout seamen put off from the Guerrière. Jonathan watched its approach with his heart in his boots.

So great was his terror of the British that it was not unlikely he thought to see the men of the Guerrière equipped with horns and tails like devils he had seen in pictures, but the sailors were neither more nor less than such sailors as he knew on their own boat and the young officer in command was most impressive in his handsome uniform.

It was all very puzzling, but there was no time to think about it, for now ten of the sailors, armed with pistols and cutlasses had boarded the Betsey and were lined up beside the young officer against the deck rail, while Captain Dacres and the crew of the Guerrière on their own deck awaited the next move in the game of war.

Captain Orne stood confronting his unwelcome guests and behind him in a straggling group were the hardy sailors of the Betsey's crew. The young officer bowed politely to Captain Orne and held up a paper

with a huge red seal on it. "Captain Dacres of the Guerrière presents his compliments, with this proclamation from His Gracious Majesty King George," he said. "It is an order calling upon all British seamen who have entered foreign service to return at once to their own. I need not remind you, sir, that your ship is now our prize and no explanations are due, but as a matter of courtesy, Captain Dacres prefers you to know that he is acting under orders."

Captain Orne bowed his head and the young officer turned to the crew of the Betsey. "Let any men who have been in the British service come forward," he commanded.

"I told you so," groaned Barney in Jon's ear, but resistance was impossible and he stepped forth from the crowd and stood before his captors while Jonathan, trembling but loyal, stood stanchly beside him, determined to sink or swim with his only friend.

"If you please, sir," protested Barney, touching his forelock and scraping the deck

with his foot in a sailor's bow, "I've sailed on British ships, to be sure, but I'm an American citizen. Naturalized! I have me papers."

"Papers!" snorted the young officer, losing for a moment his impressive manners. "This proclamation especially denies that naturalization in another country frees you from allegiance to your own. A man with a brogue like yours can't pass himself off for anything but a British subject anywhere in the world. You may count yourself lucky not to be hanged as a deserter! Get your seaman's chest and go aboard at once."

He pointed sternly to the deck of his own ship as he spoke, and Barney, knowing too well that he was helpless, went below for his chest. Jon went with him, and when he returned to the deck, followed him to the gangway. The officer looked at the boy, and drew down the corners of his mouth in a quizzical smile. "So you're a British sailor too, are you?" he said not unkindly.

Jonathan opened his mouth to reply, but

before he could get out a word, Barney, as usual, was before him.

"The lad comes from the same place as meself, sir," he said, "and is wishful to stay with me. I am, in a manner of speakin' a father to him, he bein' an orphan." The young officer gave Barney a most alarming look and pointed to the deck of the Guerrière. "Stow the biography and get back where you belong," he said sternly. "The lad goes with you, not because you ask it, but because we need a ship's boy. This prize crew," he added, turning to Captain Orne and pointing to the ten sailors, "will stay with me on the Betsey and take her to Halifax. You will go on board the Guerrière."

Crushed and humiliated, Captain Orne, Barney, and Jon made their way down the ship's ladder, and, leaping into the small boat, at once were rowed back to the British ship and stood on its deck while the British ensign was hoisted over the Betsey.

The Guerrière lingered until the Betsey's

sails were spread and her prow turned toward Halifax; then her own canvas was unfurled to catch a favoring breeze and she sped away to join her sister ships on the eastern horizon.

VI

ON BOARD THE GUERRIÈRE

VI

ON BOARD THE GUERRIÈRE

The next few days passed slowly and sullenly for the prisoners from the Betsey. There were other Americans on the Guerrière, some of whom had also been taken against their will from other ships before war was declared, and some who had shipped on the British service during the Embargo because there was no chance to enlist in their own.

Barney belonged in neither class, and both parties looked at him somewhat askance, and from the first he was a marked man. The officers singled him out for the most dangerous and disagreeable tasks on the ship. If it was necessary to scrape the main-royal mast down, or the flying-jib-boom, Barney was sure to be sent. The fact that he had allied himself with a country

now an enemy of England was an unforgivable offense which the boatswain of the ship never allowed him to forget. When he gave Barney a command, it was sure to be emphasized by an oath or by a belaying-pin sent flying after him. It seemed as if he were trying to goad him to open rebellion, but Barney obeyed orders so promptly and good-naturedly that even the boatswain found no chance to discipline him except by hard tasks and hard words.

Only to Jon did Barney unburden his mind of its bitterness in the occasional moments they had together.

"Mother Country they call old England," he said one day in a fierce whisper. "Mother Country indeed! Step-mother country I call her, always taking the best bite and sup for her own and giving the back of her hand and the sole of her foot to the green isle of Erin!"

How long he could continue in this way without an explosion was a grave question, for he was hot-tempered, and the monotony

of life on shipboard leaves time for nursing grievances and indulging petty spites, but at last came a day when all personal feelings were swallowed up in a common excitement.

On the larboard bow of the Guerrière the quartermaster reported a sail. Instantly the officers' telescopes were leveled at the horizon, and it was not long until the hull came into view, showing that she was an American frigate. The Guerrière and her sister ship the Belvidera were quite near together when the stranger was first sighted, and the Shannon was only five miles behind, while over the horizon the mast-heads of the British fleet pricked the blue.

Captain Dacres walked the deck, tense with the excitement of a coming chase, for with the whole British fleet arrayed on one side and the solitary American frigate on the other, it seemed but a question of a little time before the army of cats must surely catch this one stray mouse.

Eagerly Captain Dacres watched his

chance to creep up upon her, but just at the crucial moment the wind died to a dead calm, leaving the two ships equally helpless.

Barney and Jon with Captain Orne stood amidships, breathless with suspense, hoping, perhaps even praying, that some vagrant breeze might suddenly fill the sails of the American ship and blow her away out of reach of their guns. But it was not to be. The sea was like glass. Here and there little whiffs of wind made "cat's-paws" for a moment, which almost instantly disappeared again, leaving the water as calm as before.

Suddenly Barney gave Jon's shoulder a grip, and pointed to the strange ship.

"Begorra, lad," he said, in a fierce undertone, "that's the frigate Constitution, or I'm a Dutchman! I've seen her in port more than once, and she's got as foxy an old man in command of her as any that sails the seas! Captain Isaac Hull he is! Holy Saints! but 'twould be a pretty sight to see

him give all these barnacles the slip!" He swept his hand in the direction of the cordon of British ships and swallowed a chuckle, suddenly aware that his enemy the boatswain had his eye upon him.

For some time the two ships watched one another without either being able to make a move, but at last the impatient watchers on the Guerrière were thrilled to see that the American ship was lowering her boats, each manned by sturdy seamen, and that the boats immediately sped away over the smooth waters, dragging lines after them.

It was with difficulty that Barney kept himself from dancing with excitement. "They're going to kedge her! They're going to kedge her!" he murmured to Jon.

"What's kedging?" asked Jon.

"They carry an anchor ahead of her and drop it, then wind up the cable on the capstan and pull the ship up to it, and then do it all over again," said Barney, making an elaborate show of working hard at the rope

he was splicing. "It's a heart-breakin' chance, but their only one, far as I can see, with the whole coast fleet ready to pounce on her the minute the wind freshens."

The Shannon was now closer to the Constitution than the Guerrière, and, seeing this new move in the game of war, she immediately began to lower her own boats and signal to her sister ships to send theirs to her assistance.

"Man the boats and lower away," shouted Captain Dacres in immediate obedience to the call.

"And you there, Barney," roared the voice of the boatswain, "go in the first boat and be quick about it!"

"Aye, aye, sir," said Barney, and instantly disappeared, only remarking in an aside to Jon, "it's little help I'll be able to give 'em this day. I'm feeling powerful weak in me arms."

Too young to be of any use in this work, Jonathan was then left alone to watch a strange and terrible race. On the deck of the

Constitution he could see the men like mere specks walking round and round the capstan pulling the great ship forward by main strength, while nearer, on the deck of the Shannon, her men tramped as steadily in an effort to bring their ship within gun-range of her. He could even catch the sound of the monotonous chant which timed their steps, as they bent forward, pushing, pushing, pushing, then waited for the anchor to be again lifted and carried forward.

All the long summer day the two ships struggled for advantage, and all the day neither gained upon the other. At last, toward dusk, a light breeze filled the sails of the Guerrière, and with his heart in his mouth Jon watched the distance growing less and less between her and the American ship.

Occasional shots rang out, making harmless splashes in the water, but the Constitution managed to keep just out of range of the guns, and they could get no nearer. All night they followed her, sometimes helped

by a fickle breeze, again pulled by the strength of many arms, until the men fell exhausted and slept like logs upon the deck, only to rise and struggle on again when their brief respite was over.

All the second day the grim struggle kept on without gain on either side. Even Jon, boy though he was, was called to lend his little strength to the task at the capstan-bar, and, almost bursting with anxiety for his country's ship, he tramped round and round until he too fell asleep in his tracks.

Late in the afternoon of the second day of the chase a sudden squall came sweeping over the quiet sea. It struck the Constitution first and the officers on the British ships, seeing her let go everything by the run, immediately followed suit. The boats were hastily recalled, sails were reefed and everything snugged down for the expected blow, but when the clouds lifted again, and the rain ceased, the Constitution had disappeared and they saw her no more.

"Didn't I tell you Captain Hull was a

foxy one?" chuckled Barney to Jon. "He's fooled 'em for sure! He made 'em believe it was a terrible blow comin' and then as soon as the squall struck and hid 'em, glory be! didn't he make sail and get away as if the divil was after him! He did; and I'll bet Captain Dacres is madder than a wet hen, if so be he senses the trick that's been played on him."

It may be that he did sense it, for the day after that was a gloomy one on board the Guerrière. Captain Dacres paced the deck frowning savagely and every now and then he searched the sea with his glass in the vain hope of catching a glimpse of the vanished ship.

The boatswain vented his spite especially on Barney, who obeyed his orders with an exasperating cheerfulness that nearly drove him mad. When, in an unlucky moment, he discovered the Irishman doing a double shuffle to the tune of Yankee Doodle whistled under his breath, the officer's last strand of patience snapped, and Barney spent the

rest of the day on his knees holystoning the deck. This, too, he did with the utmost cheerfulness, only remarking to Jon, as he scrubbed away, "Blow me, but 'twas worth it, lad."

VII

A SEA FIGHT

VII

A SEA FIGHT

THOUGH she was out of sight, it was plain to all on board the Guerrière that the Constitution was not at all out of the mind of Captain Dacres. Every day he kept a special lookout for her, and more than once he was heard to say to the officer of the deck, "Just let me have one more chance at her, and she'll not give us the slip again, I promise you."

But days lengthened into weeks, and there was no sign of her upon the sea. In vain the Guerrière patrolled the coast in the hope of meeting her, and Captain Dacres had almost begun to despair of a second chance, when out of a clear sky it came.

On an August afternoon, as Barney was seated on a coil of rope in his off watch, teaching Jon the art of making sailors' knots,

a sudden cry from the lookout made them spring to their feet and search the endless waste of waters in every direction. Far away on the horizon to the northwest they could make out a ship, but what flag she flew they could not tell.

Casting the ropes aside, Jon and Barney went forward on deck to get a better view. They found Captain Dacres standing in the bow, eagerly scanning the stranger through his spy-glass. The speck grew larger and larger as they watched. It was plain that the ship was heading toward them.

Captain Orne was standing near with a crowd of sailors from below decks, and Captain Dacres handed the spy-glass to him, saying courteously: "She's either a French or an American frigate, I think. See if you can make her out."

Captain Orne took the glass, and every one waited eagerly to hear the Yankee sailor's opinion.

"She's an American frigate by the cut of her sails," he said after a long look.

"She's coming too boldly for an American," said Captain Dacres, with a touch of superiority in his tone, "but the better she behaves the more honor we shall have in taking her."

Captain Orne said nothing, Barney winked at Jon, and the two withdrew out of earshot behind the fore-mast.

"If that ship's name is not 'Constitution,' my name is not Patrick Ambrose Barney," he whispered, "and if so be it is, holy Saints, but there's going to be a regular party here

before long! She's coming after us like a mad bull after a red rag."

It was soon plain to every one on board that the ship sailing so steadily toward them was none other than their old friend, and there was an immediate call of "All hands clear ship for action!"

Orders flew thick and fast. General quarters was sounded, and the crew took their stations ready for the fight which was almost upon them. Captain Dacres turned to Captain Orne.

"I suppose you do not wish to fight against your own countrymen," he said. "You are at liberty to go below the waterline, and the other Americans may go with you if they choose."

There were in all ten Americans on the Guerrière, and, greatly relieved by this generosity on the part of the Captain, they separated themselves at once from the rest of the crew and went below.

Barney started to go with them, but was intercepted by his enemy the boatswain.

"Here, you swab!" he bawled, giving Barney a blow with his fist. "Nobody gave *you* leave to go below! You're no American. You're a plain coward. Help man that gun over there and take the brat with you as powder-monkey. Give your countrymen a salute with solid shot or I'll fill you full of lead instead!"

He drew his pistol from his belt as he shouted his order, and, sticking it against Barney's ribs, pushed him toward the gun. Jon followed as Barney staggered forward across the deck.

"Go below!" cried Barney to Jon. "There's no doubt about you being an American. Go below, I tell you!"

But Jon, unheeding, ran on beside his friend, until he stumbled against a coil of rope and, plunging headlong over it, struck his head against the gun to which Barney had been assigned. For a moment he was stunned, and in that moment a roar of guns from the Guerrière opened the famous fight.

When a little later he sat up dizzily and looked about for Barney, he saw him standing beside his gun, holding the swab raised aloft in his hand like a flag, and gazing defiantly into the furious face of the boatswain.

"Load, I tell you, *load*," screamed the boatswain, "or when this fight is over I'll hang you from the yard-arm with my own hands!"

Barney faced him unmoved. "I'll not fire a shot against—" Jon heard him say, but the sentence was unfinished, for at that moment the first volley from the Constitution answered the Guerrière, and, sweeping over the deck, mowed both the boatswain and Barney down before it.

Benumbed from his blow, and too horror-stricken to move, Jon sat still for a moment, gazing at the terrible scene before him, then, collecting his scattered wits, he bent over the unconscious body of his friend and tried to staunch the blood which was flowing freely from wounds in his side and leg.

By this time the battle was raging furiously on both decks, and the air was filled with flying splinters, with cordage, torn sails, and bits of wreckage of all sorts, as the Constitution poured upon her enemy a continuous rain of shot. The shouts of the officers and the cries of wounded men rose like a fearful obbligato above the roar of guns.

In this way several dreadful minutes passed; then the Guerrière wore round in her course and, wallowing in the trough of the sea, struggled to pour a broadside across the decks of her enemy. So near did she pass to the other ship that for a few moments her bowsprit overhung the deck of the Constitution, and became entangled in her rigging.

Sailors on both decks rushed to the rail with drawn cutlasses ready to repel boarders, and for a time the two vessels moved along side by side, gun answering gun until the decks of both were slippery with blood, and still Jon crouched beside the gun, pro-

tecting Barney as best he could from the wreckage flying about him.

The Guerrière was now plainly getting beyond control. So much of her rigging had been shot away that she could no longer be handled, but was tossed about at the mercy of every wave. As she rolled back and forth every movable thing on the deck rolled with her in a horrible rhythm. Bodies of the dead and dying, masses of loose cordage, kegs of powder, slid forward and back, forward and back.

Barney would have slid too, but Jon clung to the base of the gun, steadying his body as it plunged this way and that. Suddenly, to his added horror he saw that the tackle of the gun itself was loose and that with another roll of the ship the great monster would go charging across the deck, crushing everything in its path. Barney lay directly before it, and, frenzied by this new terror, Jon sprang to his feet, seized the helpless body of his friend, and, filled with a sudden strength, dragged it along the slippery deck

as far as the break of the forecastle in the bow. He was barely in time, for the gun, loosed from its moorings, tore its way across the deck just behind him, leaving wreckage in its wake too hideous to be described.

It was impossible for Jon to get Barney below unaided, for he was a long distance from the hatchway, the deck was heaped with débris, the air full of flying missiles, and, worst of all, the terrible gun was still at large.

He protected Barney's body as best he

could by shoving it against the bulwarks, then, seizing an instant when the roll of the boat was in his favor, he dashed down the length of the deck, leaped over the obstructions in his path, and, miraculously escaping the flying shot, flung himself down the hatchway. A moment later he burst in upon the group of haggard Americans below deck, shouting, "Barney's hurt, Barney's hurt!"

"Where is he?" said Captain Orne, leaping to his feet.

"Up forward against the bulwarks. I'll show you," cried Jon, and, turning, he dashed back up the hatchway with Captain Orne at his heels.

As they came out upon the deck a fearful crash shook the Guerrière from stem to stern, and a mast fell across the rail within a few feet of them, crushing everything beneath it, and causing the ship to list so heavily to one side that the wild gun rolled as far as it could and stopped, and other guns dipped below the water-line.

Finding it impossible to cross the barrier so suddenly thrown in their path, they tried to go up the other side of the deck, but the tide of battle had turned that way for the moment, and again their progress was barred. They saw Captain Dacres fall wounded in the thick of the fight as he was cheering on his men, then, as he was carried below, saw the struggling mass surge back and forth like a headless monster in its death-throes.

Caught in this mad whirl, Jon found himself separated from the others, and struggling blindly among the elbows of the fighting men. Desperately he dodged, first one way, then another, until, dizzy and bewildered, he was thrown against the fallen mast. He climbed up on it to get his bearings and watch for a chance to reach his goal.

Suddenly there was a lull in the roar of battle, and soon a mighty cheer rose from the deck of the Constitution, and, looking upward, Jon was astonished to see the Brit-

ish flag being hauled down. "They've struck, they've struck," he gasped, and, overcome, he sank for a moment upon the fallen rigging.

The guns were now silent, but around him rose the terrible aftermath of battle. There were shrieks and groans from the wounded, the creaking of the fallen rigging, the flapping of torn sails, the slap of waves against the ship's sides, and above all other sounds, the cursing of the maddened crew.

Almost immediately the work of clearing the decks began on both ships. The wounded were carried below into the cockpit, the dead were thrown into the sea, and Jon, struggling from his perch to the deck, at last succeeded in making his way to the spot where he had left Barney lying. To his horror he was no longer there! Distractedly he rushed about among the swarming sailors trying to find him, and in doing so ran into Captain Orne again.

"Where is he? Have you seen him?" he cried.

Captain Orne shook his head. Just then Jon caught a glimpse of a shock of red hair as two men passed carrying a heavy burden to the rail on the opposite side of the deck.

"There he is, there he is!" he screamed, and, leaping forward, he reached them just as they were in the act of hoisting Barney's body over the rail!

"Stop, stop!" he shouted. "He isn't dead, he isn't dead!" and, flinging himself upon them, he clung to Barney's legs with all his strength. Captain Orne was beside him in an instant, and together they kept the men from finishing their task.

"Get along with you," said one of the sailors. "He's as dead as Julius Cæsar."

"He's not, he's not!" Jon insisted. "Let go of him, and we'll take him below."

"Who are you to be giving us orders?" said one of the men, but they laid Barney down again upon the deck nevertheless, and between them Jon and Captain Orne somehow succeeded in carrying him down the hatchway to the place below decks where the Americans had awaited the outcome of the battle.

Here they laid him gently down, with Jon's coat for a pillow. Captain Orne got down on his knees beside him and laid his ear over Barney's heart. The other Americans had by this time gone above to help care for the wounded, and only Jon, Captain

Orne, and two other Americans remained below. There was a breathless stillness as the Captain listened for a heart-beat.

"I'm afraid he's done for," he said at last, lifting his head. "I can't find any pulse."

"And it was our own guns that shot him down," sobbed Jonathan, "just as if he'd been an enemy instead of a friend! I heard him say, 'I'll not fire a shot against —' and then there was a roar and he fell in front of his gun."

"That's war," said Captain Orne grimly.

They bound up his wounds as best they could, then Captain Orne and the other men went back on deck, leaving Jon alone with Barney. For a long time he watched the still face, hoping against hope for some sign of life, and at last, as he was on the verge of despair, Barney's eyes suddenly opened, and, gazing up bewildered into Jon's face, he said feebly: "Where am I? What's happened?"

"Oh, Barney, Barney!" gasped Jon, be-

side himself with joy and relief, "you're here—below decks. You were hit by our own guns—the very first shot."

A spasm of pain passed over Barney's face, then he said faintly: "There's maybe luck in that! They saved me life by shootin' me as like as not, for, bein' shot, I'm less likely to be hanged by that bos'n when the battle's over!"

"Oh, but Barney, it's over now," cried Jon, "and our ship won! Captain Dacres is wounded and the boatswain is dead. He was killed by the same shot that wounded you!"

"Is it the truth you're tellin' me, lad?" demanded Barney, lifting himself up with sudden energy. "Sure, the news puts new strength into me, and ye'll not be called to read the burial service over Patrick Ambrose Barney—not yet awhile, thanks be to God!"

It was seven o'clock of a summer evening and broad daylight still when the last shot had been fired, and the work of clearing away the wreckage of battle began. The

hideous task was still unfinished when darkness fell.

The Constitution had withdrawn a little distance during the interval, to repair her own damages, and as the darkness came on she returned to receive the Guerrière's formal surrender. An officer from the American ship then came on board, and the night was spent in transferring her crew to the victorious Constitution.

As the wounded British Captain climbed feebly up the ladder to the deck, Jon was amazed to see Captain Hull go forward to greet him as if he were a friend, and, leaning over the rail, stretch forth his own hand to help his injured enemy on board. Jon turned his astonished face to Barney, who had been transferred with the wounded and was now lying propped up against the rail not far away.

"Did you see that?" he asked. "You'd think they were friends, and half an hour ago they were doing their best to kill each other!"

Barney gave a short laugh. "That's war," he said. "Don't try to make sense out of it. There isn't any."

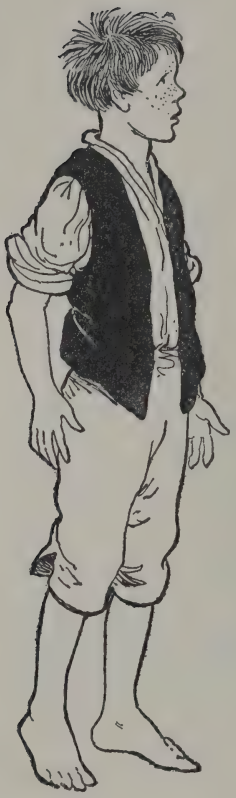
The Constitution, now filled to overflowing by the addition to her numbers, lay to and waited for the dawn. Jon and Barney, with many other sailors, slept on deck under the stars and woke with the first streak of dawn, to see the helpless wreck of the Guerrière rolling back and forth in the trough of the sea, at the mercy of every wave. Barney cocked an experienced eye at her.

"She's not long for this world," he remarked to Jon.

It was clear that Captain Hull was of the same opinion, for all haste was made to clear the battered hulk of everything that was to be transferred, and by three o'clock in the afternoon the doomed vessel was left stripped and desolate.

Soon clouds of smoke were seen issuing from the hold, and as the Constitution made sail and moved majestically away, a mighty explosion shook the air and flames from

the dying vessel leaped high over the waters. In a short time nothing was left of the proud Guerrière but blackened wreckage strewn upon the surface of the sea.



VIII

THEY REACH BOSTON

VIII

THEY REACH BOSTON

THE cruise of the Constitution before she reached port was one of acute misery to every one on board the overcrowded ship. With twice the number of men she usually carried, with sick and wounded to be cared for, with scant provision for so many men and no chance to get more, the days passed in increasing discomfort.

To Jon, herded on deck with many sailors from the Guerrière, with only hard planks for a bed and his coat for a pillow, and with his wounded friend beside him sharing the same hardships, the time seemed never-ending. Often, as he lay awake in the night looking up at the stars, listening to the creaking of the cordage, the flapping of sails as the wind changed, the voices of wakeful men talking together, and

the snores of sleeping ones, the striking of the ship's bell and the orders shouted by the officer of the deck watch, he thought of the last night he slept in the hay at Farmer Brinkman's. The noises of rats in the corn-bin and bats in the rafters seemed as nothing to him then, and his soft bed in the hay the height of luxury.

He thought much of Phœbe, too, and of his last meeting with her, and longed with homesick longing to see her again. The horrible scenes he had passed through haunted him, and more than one night his hard pillow was wet with tears as salt as the spray which sometimes drifted over him.

The final day of the voyage came at last, however, and great was the excitement on board the gallant Constitution as she entered the harbor of Boston, sailed majestically through the crowded shipping, and anchored.

In spite of hardships, Barney had gained steadily in strength, and on this great day

was able to stand by the rail, leaning on Jonathan's shoulder, to watch the thrilling scenes that followed their arrival. During all the weeks they had been at sea no news had reached them, and they could not know that the war had been going so badly on land that the whole nation was discouraged and afraid.

News of the arrival of the frigate in the harbor spread like wild-fire through the city, and when the further news of her great victory was known, the whole population went mad with joy. The rejoicing spread in ever-widening circles, until the whole country joined in one grand chorus of praise for Captain Hull and the heroes of the Constitution. The gallant ship itself was particularly included in the general good feeling, and ever since has been affectionately known as "Old Ironsides."

For days the joyful celebration continued. Bells were rung in the steeples, guns were fired, Captain Hull and his officers were marched through streets lined with cheer-

ing crowds to a great banquet in Faneuil Hall, and Congress sent him a gold medal and fifty thousand dollars to be divided among his men. The invincible sea-power of Great Britain had received a terrific blow, her pride was humbled, and, as Farmer Brinkman would have put it, "the little game rooster was on the fence crowing, already."

To Jon and Barney came only distant echoes of the festivities, for Barney was still disabled and Jon would not leave him. They watched the removal of the prisoners and wounded from the ship, said good-bye to Captain Orne and the sailors they had known, saw most of the crew go ashore to celebrate in their own fashion, and, then, having nowhere to go themselves, sat down on the strangely empty deck to consider their situation.

"The trouble is," said Barney, fishing in his pocket for tobacco and finding none, "the trouble is, Jon, I'm not fish, flesh, nor yet fowl! The Britishers think I'm a de-

serter, and the Americans are maybe thinking I'm a spy, and betwixt the two of 'em, I don't seem to be belongin' anywhere at all." He put his empty pipe in his mouth. "Not even a bit of tobacco for Barney," he said, plaintively.

"It isn't fair!" cried Jon, stamping his foot angrily. "You're a lot more of a hero than most of 'em."

"Sure it's not fair," agreed Barney, "but we're kind of private heroes, you and me, Jon. Nobody knows it but us, so there's no use bletherin' about it. Nobody ever said things was fair in this world, far as I know. The question is, what'll we do? Captain Hull told the bos'n a few of us could stop on deck another night or so, and then the old boat has got to be overhauled and made ready for sea again, and I've got to go into dry-dock for repairs meself."

Jon took his yellow head in his hands and thought and thought. Barney stared straight ahead at the bowsprit and thought, too. Their situation seemed desperate

enough, for they had no money, no food, and no friends.

At last Barney said: "Shake a leg, lad! Moping won't help. Go ashore and take a walk and see the sights. Maybe something'll turn up. Mind you don't lose yourself now, for they do say the streets in this town tie themselves up in knots. Get back by sundown for I'll be missing you."

"Sure you don't need me, Barney?" said Jon. "I won't go if you do."

"Get along with you!" said Barney, giving him a playful shove. "How do you think I got along before ever I knew you?" And a few moments later, as he leaned on the ship's rail and watched the little figure disappearing up the crooked street, he murmured to himself, "Indeed and in troth, I'm wonderin' that same meself."

For several days Jon and Barney managed to pick up a scanty living about the wharves. They slept on the deck of "Old Ironsides," which was now tied up at the wharf, and, with a few pennies Jon was able

to pick up by catching fish off the dock and selling them, or by running errands, they bought food enough to keep body and soul together.

In spite of everything, Barney kept on getting better and better, and now could get about quite well by leaning on a stick which Jon found for him. Still their problem seemed no nearer solution, and there were times, especially at nightfall, that Jon was discouraged. At such times Barney was sure to be more than usually cheerful.

"Bless me, but we're the lucky dogs, now," he said one evening, as they sat on the edge of the dock with their feet hanging over, eating their meager supper and looking at the sunset glow reflected in the water. "Here we are alive, and that's somethin', for there's plenty that can't say as much. And there's the future all before us, and the past is all behind. That's somethin' too, and I've a feelin' in me bones that more luck is likely to be happenin' almost any minute. So cheer up, me hearty,"

and he slapped Jon on the back so encouragingly that he nearly sent him off the dock-end into the water.

"It'll have to happen pretty soon," said Jon gloomily, "or we'll be no better than common beggars."

"Well," said Barney philosophically, "some beggars are pretty good. Let you not have any sinful pride."

Just at this moment Jon choked on his crust. Perhaps he would have choked anyway, for there was a lump in his throat that was no fault of the crust, so he scrambled to his feet and sauntered off by himself, hoping Barney would not see him wipe his eyes on his sleeve.

As he went around the corner of a huge warehouse beside the dock, a gust of wind caught him, filling his eyes with dust, and blowing a stray newspaper slap against his stomach. Jon clutched it.

"I'll take it to Barney," he thought to himself, and a moment later he was back at the dock-end looking quite cheerful. "Have

a squint at the news," he said, tossing the paper into Barney's lap.

Barney picked it up, glanced at it, and then to Jon's astonishment uttered a wild Irish yell and scrambled to his feet as if something had bitten him.

"Hooroo!" he cried, waving his stick, "didn't I tell you something was going to happen? Look ye here! Here's news!"

He pointed his finger at an item on the front page.

"Captain Hull has resigned, and Captain Bainbridge has been placed in command of the Constitution, the Essex, and the Hornet! Glory be, he's a commodore! The old man's a commodore, do ye mind!"

Jon stared at the paper, and then at Barney's beaming face. "Nothing has happened to *us* that I can see," he said. "It's happened to *them*."

"Just you wait and see," chuckled Barney. "He's comin', the old man's comin', the paper says! He's comin' to-morrow to take a look at Old Ironsides here, and when he comes me old friend Patrick Ambrose Barney will be in the receivin' line or thereabouts!"

Cheered by this forlorn and indefinite hope, the two sought their hard bed and slept soundly until the dawn.

IX

THE COMMODORE

IX

THE COMMODORE

"THIS day's as long as a rainy Sunday," Barney remarked to Jon next morning as they wandered up and down the dock, waiting impatiently for the Commodore to appear. "I thought the old man would be here before this time. He routs 'em out early on shipboard, I know, and here it is ten o'clock by me gold watch and chain," (he glanced at the sun, which was his only time-piece) "and he's not here yet."

"He doesn't know who is waiting for him or he'd hurry," said Jon, with a touch of sarcasm.

"Hold your whist!" said Barney, cuffing him affectionately. "Do I hear something? I do. 'Tis carriage-wheels. Run lad and take a look up the street."

Jon ran the length of the dock, and in a moment returned out of breath.

"He's coming," he cried, "and a lot of officers with him. You should see the gold braid!"

Barney was already hobbling down the long wharf toward the ship, and when the party at last approached the gangway, there he stood beside it, his face beaming like a newly polished warming-pan. News of their arrival had flown like the wind about the wharves, and a group of sailors, stevedores, and idle men at once gathered on the dock to gaze at the distinguished visitors.

"Out of the way, there," said a young officer, pushing his way pompously through the crowd gathered about the gangway, to make a passage for the Commodore and his suite. "Have you nothing to do but get in the way of your betters?" He gave Barney a shove as he spoke which nearly unbalanced him.

There was an angry murmur from the

crowd, and Jon's indignation got the better of him.

"Can't you see he's wounded?" he cried to the young officer.

The clear young voice reached the ears of Commodore Bainbridge. "What's the trouble, Mr. Spencer?" he said, turning to the young officer.

"Nothing, sir, only this fellow didn t make way, sir," announced the officer, turning very red.

Commodore Bainbridge turned to look at the "fellow," and there was Barney, beaming more like a warming-pan than ever, and saluting like the walking-beam on a steamboat as he stood face to face with his beloved Captain. A look of recognition lit up the face of the Commodore, and, to the astonishment of every one, he seized Barney warmly by the hand.

"Well, Barney," he said, "what in the world are you doing here? I haven't seen you since we got back from Russia."

The crowd now gazed in open-mouthed

admiration to see the shabby sailor so honored by the great Commodore, and the young officer, redder than ever, tried to slip out of sight, but the eye of Commodore Bainbridge was upon him.

"Come here, sir," he said to Mr. Spencer. "This man," laying his hand on Barney's shoulder, "is well known to me. He has stood by me faithfully and bravely on more than one voyage. Please give him every attention, and when I have finished my inspection I wish to see him again."

"Very well, sir," said the abashed Mr. Spencer, and when the Commodore and his suite had gone on board, he escorted Barney and Jon across the gang-plank, followed by the jeers of the crowd of idlers on the dock, who thoroughly enjoyed his humiliation.

For an hour or more Barney and Jon sat on coils of rope on the fore-deck, eagerly awaiting summons, and at last a young midshipman appeared before them.

"The Commodore wishes to see you,"

he said, and led the way to the Captain's suite on the gun deck.

"You come along," said Barney to Jon, and soon the two stood before the commanding officer of three of the finest ships in the American navy.

"Now, Barney," said the Commodore, motioning him to be seated, "tell me all about yourself. Who is this boy and how did you get your wound?"

"Well, sir," began Barney, "'twas this way, sir," and then there followed the story of his meeting with Jonathan and all the adventures that had since befallen the two.

"And if it hadn't been for him," he finished, laying his hand on Jon's shoulder, "Patrick Ambrose Barney wouldn't be here at all, for three times he's saved me life. Once by draggin' me out of the path of a wild cannon, rampagin' over the gun deck of the Guerrière, and again by holdin' 'em back from spillin' me over the rail, thinkin' I was dead, and again by lookin' after me

like a mother while I was gettin' well. He's a broth of a boy, I'm tellin' you, Captain!"

"Um-m—" said the Commodore, looking keenly at Jon, who turned as red as a boiled lobster under his inspection. "And what are you doing now?" he asked.

"Just wharf-rats, as you might say, sir," said Barney, "waitin' for somethin' to turn up. I ain't what you'd call hearty yet, and wouldn't be fit to sign up for sailor's duty till I've been in drydock a spell and got me barnacles scraped off."

"Have you any money?" asked the Commodore.

"Not a penny, sir," said Barney, "but the boy is smart, sir, and by doin' errands and catchin' a fish now and again we've managed to scrape along."

"Um-m—" remarked the Commodore again.

He sat still for a few moments, drumming his fingers on the arm of his chair. Then he said, "Well, Barney, how would you like to serve again with me?"

You should have seen Barney's face then. It glowed so that you could have warmed your hands before it.

"Sure, it's me heart's own wish," he said, "but glory be, sir, look at me leg!" He motioned to it with his cane.

"We won't send you aloft for a while, Barney," said the Commodore, smiling. "I have another job for you. I have been looking for a man I could absolutely trust to take sealed orders to Captain Porter of the Essex. He's down in the Delaware now, at Chester, with his ship. I don't want to send them by boat, for the British patrol this coast, as you know, and these orders must not fall into their hands. But you could go by stage to Albany, and then go down the Hudson to New York and across New Jersey."

"I know those river boats from A to izzard, sir," cried Barney. "I worked on them a year!"

"So much the better," said the Commodore. "The boy goes with you, of course,

and maybe, when you are in fighting trim again, there'll be a chance for both of you on one of the ships in my command."

"Thank ye, sir. My duty to you, sir," cried Barney, his face fairly aflame with joy, and, turning to Jon, he cried, "Didn't I tell you, lad, something good was bound to be happening soon?"

Getting to his feet, he saluted solemnly, and Jon followed his example, speechless but happy.

"Wait a moment," said the Commodore, raising his voice. "Call Mr. Spencer."

That young man appeared almost instantly in the cabin door.

"Take charge of Mr. Barney and his young friend, if you please, Mr. Spencer," said the Commodore, "and see that they are well supplied with every necessity for an important journey. Then come back to me for letters and further instructions, and see them off on the Albany stage to-morrow. They have had a run of bad luck and must be fitted out with clothes and money,

and have a good night's rest before they start."

"Yes, sir, I will, sir," said the luckless Mr. Spencer, and when they had saluted once more, he escorted the happiest man and boy in all Boston ashore to carry out the Commodore's commands.

X

THE TURN OF THE LUCK

X

THE TURN OF THE LUCK

Jon always remembered the week that followed as one of the most wonderful of his whole life. In the first place, it was wonderful to be clean and well fed, to have slept in a real bed, and above all to be dressed in a new sailor's suit. He was no longer a shabby little wharf-rat, but a self-respecting boy, going on an important errand in the service of his country.

And as for Barney,—you should have seen him! His stubbly beard was gone, and his clean-shaven face shone like a glass bottle with the soap and water he had lavished upon it. Sewed in the pocket of his coat, along with his precious naturalization papers, was the letter from Commodore Bainbridge addressed to Captain Porter, and both Barney and Jon were prepared to

guard that letter with their very lives if it proved necessary. It was not necessary, however, for no one knew their errand, and when they had occasion to reply to questions asked by fellow travellers, Barney always said he had been wounded in the battle between the Constitution and the Guerrière, and was going home to get well.

He never lost a chance to tell how Jon had saved his life, and before they had been a day on their journey they were both classed as heroes, and were shining in the reflected glory of the great victory over which the whole country was still rejoicing.

Day followed day, each one filled to the brim with beauty, as the travellers passed from the hills of Massachusetts to the majestic scenery of the Hudson, and thence across the gentle slopes of New Jersey to the Delaware.

The last lap of the journey was made in a small boat, which carried them past Philadelphia to Chester, a few miles farther down the river. Jon gazed longingly up the

Schuylkill, as their boat swept past its junction with the Delaware, but thoughts of his sister had to be put aside until their errand was done.

When at last they crossed the gangway and stood on the deck of the Essex, they were met by a little scrap of a midshipman about Jon's own age, who inquired their errand. They saluted stiffly.

"We have a letter for Captain Porter from Commodore Bainbridge," said Barney, with some importance.

"Wait here," said the little midshipman, and disappeared. In a few moments he was back again.

"This way, if you please," he said, and led them to the Captain's cabin.

Captain Porter was seated at his desk, and when they entered the tiny room, he turned a keen gaze upon the curiously mated messengers from his superior officer. Then he opened the letter. When he was halfway through it, he glanced up at Jon, then beckoned to the little midshipman.

"This is David Farragut," he said to Jon. "He'll show you about the ship, if you like, while I finish the letter. Be back in half an hour, David."

"Aye, aye, sir," said David, and the two boys left the cabin together.

"What ship are you from?" asked David, as they made their way forward.

"Just off the Constitution," answered Jon.

David stopped stock-still and looked at him. "Do you mean to tell me you were in the big fight?" he demanded.

"We were," said Jon, "only not the way you think, maybe. We were prisoners on board the Guerrière."

"Prisoners!" exclaimed David.

"Yes, sir, prisoners," said Jon, not without some pride of adventure. "We shipped on the Betsey, and the Guerrière captured her. They took off the Captain and Barney and me. You see, they claimed Barney was an Englishman, because he's Irish! But he isn't, he's an American. He's naturalized, and he wouldn't fight against his country."

"How did he get his wound, then?" asked David, after he had considered this rather mixed statement for a moment. Jonathan responded by telling the story of Barney and the boatswain and about their meeting with the Commodore.

When he had finished, David said: "He" (meaning Barney) "isn't your father, then? I thought at first he was."

"He's been just like a father to me since

I met him," said Jon. "You see I haven't any folks any more, except my twin sister. That's why I ran away."

"You ran away?" said David.

Jon flushed. He hadn't meant to tell that, but since it had slipped out of itself, he told about the Brinkmans and Captain Carter, and his meeting with Barney, and all the rest of his life's adventures.

David listened with flattering interest, then he said, "Captain Porter isn't my real father, either, but he's just the same as a father to me. He sent me to school in Washington, and got me appointed a midshipman, and now he takes me with him on his voyages. I've been in nine fights already."

"Nine!" gasped Jon, gazing admiringly at David's uniform and feeling himself far outclassed as a hero.

"Yes, sirree, nine," answered David with some complacency, "and pirates before that. The old Essex just eats 'em up, I tell you. We took eight small ships and one big one on this voyage."

"Was the ship you took as big as the Guerrière?" asked Jon.

"Twenty guns," said David, "and it took us just eight minutes by the clock to do the job."

"The Guerrière had more guns," said Jon, not to be outdone, "and it took us half an hour or more. Eight minutes isn't much of a fight."

For a moment David looked a bit nettled, then he said:

"Well, anyway, I bet you didn't have a mutiny."

It was Jon's turn to look depressed. "No," he admitted, "did you?"

"Yes, sirree," said David. "The prisoners we had taken got arms somehow, and in the dead of the night," here his voice sank to an impressive whisper, "they were just going to begin, and one of 'em came to my hammock with a pistol in his hand to see if I was asleep. I pretended I was and fooled him. Then, when he was gone, I rolled out and told the Captain."

"Oh," gasped Jon, "then what happened?"

"You can't beat the Cap'n," chuckled David. "He ran to the berth deck shouting 'Fire! fire!' and the men all thought it was fire drill, or else a real fire, and they tumbled out and ran to their stations just as if it were one. The prisoners were so surprised and upset we soon had them in hand, and here we are, safe and sound."

Jon was just searching his memory for some thrilling experience to match this, when the two boys were startled by the voice of the Captain, who was standing by the foremast with Barney beside him. His voice was stern, but there was a twinkle in his eye as he looked at the two boys.

"I thought I told you to be back in half an hour, David," he said.

The culprits instantly sprang to their feet and saluted.

"Is it half an hour already?" cried David. "It only seemed a minute! Jonathan was

telling me about the big fight. They were in it!"

"I know it," said the Captain. "In fact, I know quite a bit about both Barney and Jonathan from Commodore Bainbridge." Then he turned to Barney. "We shall not be leaving port for some time yet," he said, "and if you are well enough by the time we sail, how would you like to ship on the Essex? Commodore Bainbridge says you are a thorough sailor and reliable, and the Essex needs a boatswain whom I can trust."

Barney's face fairly blazed with joy! A boatswain on one of the best ships in the navy! He could scarcely believe his ears, and for once in his life he was rendered perfectly speechless, but only for a moment. Then he found his tongue.

"Thank ye kindly, sir. I'll like nothing better, sir," he said joyfully. Then his eye fell on Jon. He paused, and the light went out of his face.

"But there's the lad, sir, if I may make so bold," he said. "What's to become of

him? I couldn't leave him alone. I'm a father to him, in a manner of speakin', he being an orphan."

"Never mind me, Barney," Jon said bravely, though he choked as he said it; "you mustn't miss a chance like that."

"Why couldn't Jonathan be a midshipman?" asked David, looking eagerly into the Captain's face. "We could study together and everything."

"You'd like it, would you, David?" said the Captain, smiling down at his adopted son.

"Yes, sir," said David promptly.

Jon looked from one face to another, and for an instant his hopes leaped like flames. They were as quickly quenched by the Captain's next words.

"He would have to be appointed by a Congressman from his own State," he said doubtfully. Then, turning to Jon, he asked, "Have you any friends who could help you?"

Jon remembered with despair that Cap-

tain Carter was a Member of Congress, but to ask his help would be to put himself once more in the hands of the law. Visions of Farmer Brinkman and his wife, of the barn loft and his loneliness and hopelessness there, came before him. Hard as his present life was, it was not hopeless, and, looking up at the Captain, he said, simply, "Barney is the only friend I have."

Captain Porter rumpled the hair on the back of his head as if he were puzzled, and Barney's face was overcast. David looked eagerly at his Captain, and Jon looked at the planks of the deck.

"Well," said the Captain at last to Barney, "we can't settle anything to-day, and you must get well first, anyway. Suppose you keep watch of the Essex and report here in a week from now." He glanced at Jon's downcast face. "Something might turn up, you know," he said kindly; then, turning to David, he added, "Show Barney about, and when they have gone, come back and report to me."

"Aye, aye, sir," said David, and, having saluted, the three went to make a tour of the ship. Half an hour later they parted from David at the gangway, and started on their return journey to Philadelphia.

Nightfall found them once more in the low-ceiled room of the "Steer Inn," with Mrs. Rafferty beaming upon them from above a tray of her famous flapjacks, but such luxuries as were offered by a sailors' boarding-house were not for them. Their money was already running low again, and there was no way of replenishing their purse until they found something to do. That night, in their cheap little room in the Inn, they held a council of war.

"I'm going to see Phœbe again, whatever happens," said Jon, "and if I'm caught and sent back to the Brinkmans, I can't help it. Then you could go ahead and be a boatswain on the Essex, Barney, and not think anything about me." There was a note of despair in his voice, as he added, "There isn't any place anywhere for me, anyway."

"Whist, now!" said Barney. "Let you not be talkin' such blether! If it weren't for me game leg, I'd turn ye over me knee and cheer ye up a bit! We're shipmates, lad, you and me, for the whole voyage, and if you go back to that turnip-headed old Dutchman, I'm going with ye. And I ain't goin', ye mind!"

"Weren't you ever discouraged, Barney?" he asked.

"Niver in me life on a full stomach," answered Barney promptly. "Maybe I've been a bit downhearted now and again on an empty one, but at the present time ye're plumb-full of flapjacks and life should be lookin' rosy to ye. Get into bed, lad, and to-morrow we'll go back to the Black Swan, and it's lucky we are to have a snug harbor like that to go to."

XI

UP-STREAM


STEER INN

XI

UP-STREAM

EARLY the next morning Jon and Barney said good-bye to their good friend Mrs. Rafferty, and, making their way to the docks, secured the little row-boat they had used before. Into it they loaded a small stock of provisions, and Barney's sailor's-chest, which held Jon's few clothes as well, then, getting aboard themselves, they turned the nose of the little craft up-stream. But the current of the Schuylkill was against them, and neither Barney's strength nor Jon's was equal to the task of pulling against it for such a long distance. They had got but a short way out of the city, when Barney turned toward shore.

"If you ain't strong, you've got to be smart," he said, and, beaching the boat, he found some sticks, with which and his tarpaulin he rigged a sail.

Fortunately the wind was with them, and with the help of the oars they made slow progress up-stream. Dusk overtook them when they were still far from their goal, and it was not until ten o'clock that evening that they reached the Black Swan, and, slipping between the flat rock and the wreck, tied the boat to the foot of the Jacob's-ladder.

Their long day was not ended even then, for their belongings had still to be put on board, and Barney was able to do but little on account of his leg. He mounted the ladder with difficulty, and lowered a rope to Jon, who tied their luggage in the tarpaulin and then, climbing the ladder, helped Barney pull it up on deck.

They were so weary with the day's work that when at last they threw themselves down upon their hard bed on the deck, they fell asleep at once, and knew nothing more until they were awakened by the sun streaming into their faces the next morning.

It was Jon's turn now to be cook, for Barney was no longer able to climb up and down the ladder as he had done before, and of course they could not make a fire on deck. So Jon gathered a little fuel on shore, built a fire on the rock, and made coffee and boiled some eggs, and with these and hard-tack they made a hearty breakfast.

The meal finished, Jon put some ship's-biscuit and a piece of cheese in his pocket, and, climbing down the ladder again, loosed the little boat from its moorings. He tied the rope which Barney had used in rigging the sail to the end of the tie-rope on the boat, and tossed the end to Barney, who leaned over the rail to catch it. Then he pushed the boat around the bow of the Black Swan and across the intervening strip of water, and when he was safely on land, Barney pulled it back by the rope.

"Good-bye, Barney," called Jon from the road. "I'll be back as soon as I can. Don't get lonesome while I'm gone."

And Barney's voice called back cheer-

fully, "Give me regards to that old barrel of a Dutchman if you run across him."

Jon waved his hand in farewell, and Barney stood in the prow of the boat, watching the little figure until it disappeared in the woods; then he sat down rather heavily on his old box beside the cabin door and remarked to the landscape in general, "A broth of a boy, I'm tellin' ye, and it's queer and lonesome without him, and that's the truth or I can't speak it."

Once out of sight of the boat, Jon felt queer and lonesome, too, but, eager to see his sister again, he started off at a lively pace up the road. He decided to run the chance of being recognized, and stuck to the highway in order to reach Captain Carter's house as early as possible. What he should do when he got there, he had not the ghost of an idea. He only knew that somehow he was going to see Phœbe again, let the consequences be what they might.

His eagerness grew as mile after mile slipped behind him, and by late afternoon

he found himself passing well-known places along the way that led past Farmer Brinkman's. When he reached the pasture-bars, he stopped a moment to rest and look at the familiar scene. He could hear the tinkle of cow-bells and Rip's bark, and, peeping through a screen of bushes, saw Farmer Brinkman driving the cows down the road to pasture himself.

Then suddenly there was the dog coming straight for him, giving short, sharp, welcoming barks, and in another instant he was leaping up with his paws on Jon's shoulders to lick his well-remembered freckled face.

"Down, Rip, down," pleaded Jon, and, terrified lest the dog should betray him, he fled down the lane and hid himself among the blueberry bushes in the pasture until the cows were well within the bars and the farmer had gone back again to the house.

Not venturing to pass the place on the road, he skirted it through the woods, and reached the highway again half a mile be-

yond, but the détour had taken time, and it was dusk before he reached the corn-field beside Captain Carter's house. Though he had now arrived at his destination, he was still no nearer seeing Phœbe, it seemed, for there was no sign of life about the comfortable old Colonial farm-house. Not daring to loiter within sight of the windows, he plunged into the corn-field and, hidden by the tall stalks, crept nearer and nearer to the house.

By the dimming light he could see the hens already sitting drowsily on their perches in the fowl-house. From the village in the valley came the sound of a church-bell, and Jon suddenly remembered that it was Sunday evening. A lovely young crescent moon appeared above the tree-tops, and still Jon waited hidden in the corn, and still no possible way of seeing Phœbe seemed to open before him.

Then suddenly a candle flamed in the kitchen window, making a path of light across the gloom, and he saw the dark sil-

houette of the hired man carrying a pail of milk from the barn to the house. A dog bounded before him. Jon crouched down in the corn and hoped the dog would not discover him. Then the kitchen door opened, and man and dog passed inside.

The evening was cool and damp, for rain was threatening, and Jon wondered miserably where he should pass the night. He thought of Barney alone on the boat, of Phœbe so tantalizingly near, and yet so shut away from him, and resolved desperately to do something. Slipping out of the shadowy corn-field, he ran quickly through the gloom to the house and crouched under the lighted window. There he waited for his heart to quiet down a bit. He heard voices within, and, cautiously lifting himself to the level of the window-sill, he peeped in.

The sight that met his eyes was like a glimpse of paradise to the lonely boy. A bed of coals glowed in the fire-place, and, kneeling before it toasting bread on long

forks, were his sister Phœbe and Faith Carter. Their sweet faces were rosy with the heat, and they were smiling and talking together as they added slice after slice to the plate standing on the hearth. An open door beyond gave a glimpse of a table with a white cloth on it, and lighted candles, and of an old negro woman moving about with dishes in her hand.

The hired man had set the pail of milk on the sink beside the iron pump and was washing his hands. The dog lay on one end of the wide hearth, his nose on his paws, now and then thumping his tail on the floor as an outward sign of inward content. The smell of toast reached the hungry boy, and, forgetting to be cautious, he pressed his face against the window-pane. The hired man turned at this moment to wipe his hands on the roller towel, and in doing so saw the pale face at the window.

In an instant the whole peaceful scene was changed. The hired man gave an astonished exclamation, the dog leaped to his

feet barking wildly, and the two girls, catching a glimpse of the intruder, sprang up, toasting forks still in hand.

"What is it?" cried Phœbe; but there was no answer, for the man had already flung open the kitchen door and, followed by the dog, was running round the house toward the window.

The instant he knew he was discovered Jon ran for the big oak tree and, catching one of the lower limbs, swung himself aloft with the agility of a sailor, and was out of sight in an instant. If he had had only the man to deal with, he might have escaped, but the sharp nose of the dog discovered his hiding-place, and, leaping against the tree-trunk, he barked like mad.

The hired man soon appeared beside the dog, and, looking upward, he could see the dark mass of a human body outlined against the evening sky.

"Come down out of that, you varmint," he called, "or I'll come up after you and feed you to the dog down here."

For a wild instant Jon thought of running along a limb and swinging himself through Phœbe's window, but even if he could have done it, it would have been merely a leap from the frying-pan into the fire.

"Call off your dog, and I'll come down," he said in a voice so small and shaky that the man knew at once he was dealing with a boy. He promptly collared the dog.

"Hold your tongue, Rouser," he said, and as soon as the barking ceased, a pair of legs dangled from the tree, a small figure leaped to the ground, and Jon stood before his captor.

The man promptly collared him, too, and, holding the dog with one hand and the boy with the other, dragged them both toward the kitchen door. Rouser, unwilling to be coerced, sat down on his haunches and refused to walk. Jon wanted to do the same thing, but the grip of the man was not to be resisted and boy and dog were remorselessly dragged into the kitchen. It was

empty now, for the girls had fled to the other part of the house at the first alarm, and the cook had shut herself up in the pantry.

The man released the dog's collar. "Lie down, sir," he said, pointing to the hearth. Then he turned his whole attention to the boy.

"You come along o' me," he said sternly, and, still holding his collar, he pushed him through the door, past the supper-table, and into the room beyond.

XII

THE JUDGE

XII

THE JUDGE

All unconscious of what had been going on in the kitchen, Judge Carter was sitting that Sabbath evening in the living-room of his fine old house beside an open fire which sent forth a delicious odor of burning birch wood, and opposite him, in her gray Quaker's gown and folded kerchief, sat his sweet-faced wife. The Judge was a tall man with a large nose, a firm, wide mouth and gray hair which fell in a fringe over his high stock collar. Beside him on a small table stood two candles which shed an uncertain light upon the pages of an open Bible, from which he was reading aloud to his wife.

"Blessed are the merciful," he read, and then paused with his finger on the page, as the door burst suddenly open, and Phœbe

and Faith, their eyes sparkling with excitement, exploded into the room.

"Daughter, daughter," said Mrs. Carter in gentle remonstrance, "thee and Phœbe should be more mannerly. Thee enters like a whirlwind rather than like a lady."

The two girls curtsied hastily, and closed the door.

"But Mother," cried Faith, "we have something to tell thee. Phœbe and I were making the toast, when suddenly there was a white face at the window. Abel saw it" (Abel was the name of the hired man), "and Rouser barked like everything, and the two of them ran out at once to find the wretch. They are searching for him now. Chloe has shut herself up in the pantry, and we ran to tell thee. Just listen to that dog!"

She shivered and cast a frightened glance toward the windows. The Judge appeared unmoved.

"Some wanderer, likely," he said. "Thee said his face was white? Then it could not

have been an Indian. Calm thy fears. As yet no harm has befallen us."

"Yes, but mayhap there is more than one," said Faith. "I tremble for Abel if there should be a parcel of them."

"Shall I draw the curtains?" asked Phœbe.

"Nay, child," said the Judge, rising. "It may be that it is some one in need of the services of a Samaritan. I will go out myself."

He took a step toward the door, but at that moment it was again flung open, and Jon was thrust through it, with Abel's heavy hand still upon his shoulder.

"Here he is, sir," said Abel.

For an instant four pairs of startled eyes rested on the white face of the frightened little sailor, then Phœbe gave a joyful scream and, running across the room, flung her arms about his neck.

"Jon, Jon," she cried, sobbing and laughing both at once. "Where has thee been?"

Jon was too nearly strangled to make

any reply, and for a moment the two children thought of nothing but the wonderful fact that they were together again. The Judge and Mrs. Carter, Faith and the hired man, watched the little scene without a word, and Chloe, hearing Phœbe's joyful cry and overcome with curiosity, ventured to stick her head through the pantry door.

"Bless de Lawd, if it ain't Miss Phœbe's brother riz up from the dead!" she cried, and Abel, sensing the situation at last, grinned rather sheepishly and said, "Wal —I swan!"

When their joy at seeing each other had a little subsided, the brother and sister faced the Judge. Jon, frightened and a little defiant, Phœbe with a world of pleading in her dark eyes as she looked into his calm face. The Judge sat down again in his chair.

"Come here, Jonathan," he said, and Jon obediently stood before him. "I want thee to tell me the whole story," he said. "Why did thee run away, and where has thee been since, and why did thee come back?"

"To see Phœbe," said Jon, answering the last question first.

"But why did thee come like a thief, peeping through the window, instead of knocking at the door like a man?" asked the Judge.

"I was afraid you would send me back to Farmer Brinkman's," answered Jon. The defiant look leaped up again in his eyes. "I will not go back to the Brinkmans'," he said, firmly.

The Judge lifted his brows. "Tut, tut," he said, "that is not for thee to say, lad; the responsibility rests with me."

"Oh, but, dear, dear Judge Carter," cried Phœbe, seizing the Judge's hand. "Let me speak, sir! Jon does not mean to be disobedient, he does not, indeed! He but longs to get learning, and at the Brinkmans'—"

The Judge patted her hand, but said firmly, "Hold thy peace, Phœbe, and let thy brother tell his own tale."

Thus commanded, Jon flung discretion to the winds and told the whole story of his

unhappy life at the farm, of his escape, the pursuit, his meeting with Barney on the Black Swan, and all that had happened to him since. As his story progressed, it suddenly occurred to him that he had nothing to lose by telling the Judge of his desperate desire to get an appointment as midshipman, and, setting aside his fears, he finished by saying—

"Oh, sir, if you would only help me to an appointment, Captain Porter would take me with him as a midshipman on the Essex. I could study with David Farragut. He said I could, and Barney could be bos'n. You see, sir," he pleaded, "Barney won't leave me, not even to be bos'n on the Essex, and if I can't go, he'll lose his only chance."

He stopped, and the little circle of listeners waited breathlessly for the Judge's decision.

There was a pause; then the Judge said, gravely: "I desire naught but thy good, lad. I thought a farmer's life the best pro-

spect before thee, and Farmer Brinkman is a skillful husbandman. I would not send thee back to a life of ignorance and servitude, however, and thee has shown much courage, though little of discretion. To-morrow we will go with thee to see this Barney, and if my friend Captain Porter indeed wishes thee to ship with him, I will see what can be done about thy appointment as midshipman."

Jon looked up at the Judge speechless with gratitude, and Phœbe seized his hand and kissed it.

"Oh, Jon," she cried. "I told thee he desired only thy good, but thee would not listen."

"Thee should not have feared me, lad," added the Judge, laying a kindly hand upon Jon's shoulder. "Thee has chosen a hard schooling and war is of the devil, but I will not force thee into a path not of thy choosing. If it is thy desire to follow the sea, thee is fortunate to have found favor with so good a man as Captain Porter. Some

day, when thee is grown to manhood and has completed thy training, it might even be I could find a place for thee as Captain of one of my merchant ships."

Jon's eyes grew wider and wider with astonishment and joy, as he heard these words from the lips of the man he had so much feared, but all he could find to say was: "Thank you, sir. I'll do my best, and I'll never be afraid of you again."

Mrs. Carter had said nothing hitherto, but she had been watching Jon's face, and her motherly heart was stirred by his look of weariness.

"The lad must be hungry," she said, "and it is long past the supper hour. Phœbe, show thy brother where to wash his hands, and Chloe, set a place for Jonathan, and get supper on the table."

Jonathan did not sleep in a hayloft that night, but in a soft feather-bed in Mrs. Carter's spare room, and the next morning, instead of trudging down the road alone, he sat proudly beside Judge Carter upon the

front seat of an open carriage drawn by a handsome span of gray horses. Phœbe and Faith sat with Mrs. Carter on the back seat, and in a very short time they had reached the Brinkman farm. Rip, always alert to do his duty, ran out in the road to bark at the carriage, and the Judge reined in the horses.

"Did thee leave anything there thee would like to take away with thee?" asked the Judge.

"My Mother's picture," said Jon, "and her Bible, and a few clothes. I couldn't take them when I left, because I slept in the barn."

Phœbe gave an indignant bounce in her seat. "Oh, Jon," she murmured.

"Never mind," said gentle Mrs. Carter, laying her hand on the girl's arm. "He'll sleep there no more, and I hope he may never sleep in a worse place."

It was with a strange feeling of pride and importance that Jon leaped from the carriage and, walking boldly to the kitchen door, gave it a resounding thump. It was

opened by Frau Brinkman, and when she saw Jon, their bound-out boy, standing in his sailor suit on her door-step, she gave a scream of astonishment, and called to her husband, who was just coming up from the cellar: "Look who's here! that boy once! I think mebbe he ain't for running away so much."

The amazed farmer came and stood beside his wife.

"Where did you get them clothes?" he demanded, laying his hand on Jon's collar. "Take them off now. Yust wait till I tell Judge Carter on you!"

Jon wrenched himself free. "Come and tell him now," he said defiantly. "He's here in his carriage. I came with him to get my things!"

"He came with him, to get his things!" echoed Farmer Brinkman, turning a deep purple. "Make yourself in here. I'll learn you!"

He started toward the boy, but as suddenly stepped back, for there on the door-

step beside Jon stood Judge Carter himself.

"Good morning, Mr. Brinkman," said the Judge, politely. "As he is not coming back here, Jonathan wishes to get the things he left when he ran away."

"Not coming back?" gasped the farmer. "But it was you that bound him out to me, ain't?"

"I did," said the Judge, "and I'm sorry for it, for thee is no fit person to leave a child with." Then, turning to Frau Brinkman, he said sternly, "Get the boy's belongings."

It was a pitifully small bundle that Jon carried back to the Judge's carriage, but what a moment it was when he climbed to his seat beside the Judge again and drove away in triumph, leaving the Brinkmans gazing after him, dumb with amazement, and still totally in the dark as to how this miracle had been accomplished!

And what a moment it was, too, when the carriage drew up beside the Black Swan and Jon saw Barney's surprised face appear above the deck-rail! To Jon it seemed as if it were just a series of wonderful moments after that, for Barney, beaming with joy and pride, drove with them to Philadelphia, and there the formalities of Jon's appointment as midshipman were arranged, and word of it sent to Captain Porter.

That night was spent by Barney and Jon

at Mrs. Rafferty's. The Judge and his family went to the town house which they occupied during the winter, and the next day drove back again to the farm, leaving Barney on the Black Swan, and taking Jon to stay with Phœbe until the Essex should sail.

The days of his visit passed all too quickly, each filled to the brim with happy experiences. There was the day they had a picnic with Barney on the deck of the Black Swan, and then watched him sail away alone down the river to spend the rest of his holiday with his mother "in the Jersey flats." There was the day Jon met him again, and the two went together to report to Captain Porter, and received their formal appointment as boatswain and midshipman on the Essex; and oh, what a day it was when he put on his new uniform for the first time, and Phœbe nearly burst with pride! Faith was almost as proud as Phœbe, for Jon and the two girls had become such companions by this time that it

almost seemed to him as if he had two sisters instead of one.

The days lengthened into weeks, and still the Essex lingered in port, but at last there came a golden morning in October when the Carter family and Phœbe went with crowds of gaily dressed people to the dock in the navy yard at Chester to see the Essex sail away.

They were shown about the beautiful vessel with great pride by David and Jonathan, who had already become good friends, then good-byes were said, people were sent ashore, gang-planks were drawn in, and the great ship swung gently into the broad channel of the Delaware, and, lifting its white sails to the breeze, moved majestically down-stream.

On the deck, as it sailed away, resplendent in his new uniform, stood Midshipman Jonathan Ogden, with Midshipman David Farragut beside him, and above the heads of the two boys, like a harvest moon,

rose the beaming face of Boatswain Patrick Ambrose Barney.

Through many hardships and adventures the two boys were to stand thus shoulder to shoulder, with faithful Barney watching over them, and when, in later years, David had become a famous Admiral and Jonathan master of a great merchant ship, the friendship begun on the cruise of the Essex was to remain steadfast and true.